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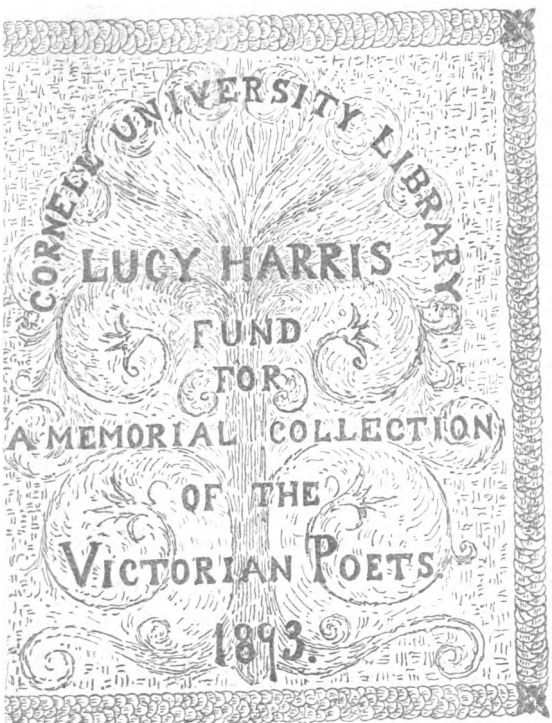

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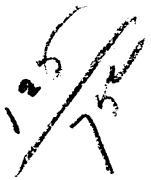

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SHORT POEMS.

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LONDON :
GILBERT AND RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,
ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.

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SHORT POEMS.

BY

KENELM HENRY DIGBY, ESQ.

Second Edition.

LONDON:
BURNS, LAMBERT, AND OATES,
17 AND 18, PORTMAN STREET, PORTMAN SQUARE,
AND 63, PATERNOSTER ROW.
1866.

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[*Sold for the poor visited by the Conference of St. Vincent of Paul.*]

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Sunset	1
Epistles from Paris	2. 8. 18. 24
All-Hallows Eve at Paris	29
All Souls	34
We are leaving	41
The Remedy for Human Sadness	43
The Marriage at Cana in Galilee	72
Ireland	77
Love after Death	83
Too Late	84
The Club	85
The Despondent Cured	91
Poesy *versus* Prose	95
The Past	103
Early Life	110
Solitude	117
The Pedlar	118
Spring	123

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POEMS.

SUNSET.

WESTWARD, as the sun went down
Through clouds of radiant gold,
I turnèd from the busy town
To think of days of old.

How bright, how calm the roseate air,
Transforming mists from clay;
Oh, how the fancy flies up there
To feel eternal day!

If floating vapours thus can be
So gorgeous and so grand,
What must it prove for those who see
The scene where angels stand?

What must it prove for those we knew
On earth so fond and dear,
Translated now to have the view
Of all that glory near?

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Methinks I see them there on high,
As art will show the saints,
To cheer the fading tear-worn eye
Of him whose courage faints.

Methinks I see thee, each one bright,
Thy leading passion crown'd;
The heart, the ear, the touch, the sight,
Content where all is found.

How short is life! a dream its joy!
But what is that to me,
If faith its strength and sense employ
To lead me there to thee?

Oh, Christ! the earth grows lone and cold;
Our faults we have to rue;
Yet, if our fancies may be told,
Our hearts for Thee are true.

EPISTLES FROM PARIS.

TO M. LE COMTE D'ESGRIGNY, WITH A SWALLOW ON THE COVER, FROM PARIS.

YOUR letters, D'Esgrigny, are always so *belles*
Ambition at last has inflamed a poor swell
To send you some verses whereby he may be
For once at least sure of a high victory.

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Entre nous, just for fun, take kindly what's low ;
Address'd to a French ear, it will not sound so ;
Besides, I remember when with us in town,
To pick up our prime words you'd search up and down;
The quaintest new phrases you seem'd to enjoy,
To learn them you listen'd to any poor boy.
If pedants object to what's homely and sweet,
At least you took pleasure in "*How's your poor feet?*"
Why, Ménage to Balzac used often to say,
Alone as we are now, I think we both may
Commit faults in grammar and speak as the free ;
So precedents grave we can cite, as you see,
While not showing aught but "*gaminerie*" mere,
With freedom and fun as now soon shall appear.
Well, so much for preface ; I cough and begin,
Determined the fame of a Horace to win.
Then now, all ye gentles, I pray you sit breathless
To listen to lines that I'm sure will prove deathless ;
For he who has just slept on Drachenfels' height
Must prove, I'm persuaded, a child of great might
To light up your spirits and make you feel jolly,
And banish all dull-eyed and base melancholy.
Epistles in verse with high beauties oft shine ;
Those of Shelley, I know, are graver than mine.
What would you ? From Frenchmen the phrase I must borrow ;
A snap for your beauties so pale with their sorrow,
Imagined and self-made, with mystical phrase,
Which readers like me only fill with amaze.

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But what have I really at this time to say?
Why, nothing, save wishes for —— every day
That you and all yours may still have the pleasure
Which you know so well to dole out with measure.

But come let me your fine ears shock,
And give your worship cause to mock,
By sudden jumps to lines with feet,
Which, for the nonce, I think more meet.
I have in albums landscapes bright,
To be submitted to your sight:
Which means a double pair of eyes,
A feature to cause no surprise.
I cannot send them through the air,
Although directed to the fair;
I cannot send them by my bird;
He only chirrups what he's heard.
But still the news of them may go,
And merrily salute you so.
These now are all that I can send
To my sincere, kind-hearted friend,
Whose talk, whose music, and whose dance
Have made us three in love with France.
To both this swallow bears my greeting,
Until there be a happy meeting.
For flying south 'tis just the season;
Though for that course he has a reason
That's quite apart from cold and rain,
Since 'tis our friendship to sustain.

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And were it north he had to fly,
He ought to be content to die.
But Pouliguen in every sort
Must prove for him a happy port.
Go then, my bird, and in your bill
Bear what I've written with this quill.
Friends, if in aught I have offended,
When we next meet it shall be mended,
So far at least as I have power
From cruel thorns to free a bower,
Which always should be bright as May,
Though it were on a winter's day.

From Germany now that my heels are quite free,
I own there was much both to hear and to see,
As we sped to the Baths, which natives call "Bad,"
Which to many indeed prove fatal and sad.
The Rhine it was gloomy, the air was quite brown
With smoke of long pipes, and not that of a town;
Still, do not suppose that I saw without joy
Those scenes which delighted me so as a boy,
Those grim feudal towers, on rocks perch'd so high,
Which seem'd still to frown on us as we pass'd by.
Ehrenfels, Rheinstein, Falkenburg, and the rest,
With Staleck and Sonneck and Gutenfels' nest,
And Rhindiebach, Schönberg, with Rolandseck famed,
Ehrenbreitstein from which my own books were first named;
And Godesberg, Drachenfels,—do you want more?
I still in reserve have a plentiful store.

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Would you view a scene sylvan of old ruins gray?
Let me lead you thro' fields where few will now stray.
'Tis Heisterbach's cloister so beauteous and old,
Where Cæsar's wild legends no longer are told.
Mr. Tourist, I pray you while reading, to note,
I speak not of him who his Gaulish wars wrote.
Still keep to your Dampfschiff, ne'er trouble your head;
For both of these Cæsars so famous are dead.
But I own I was shock'd to find on the spot
How totally one of them was now forgot.
For a Gasthaus itself it might be a thing,
If his name could be made through these woods to ring;
But there they kept drinking and smoking about,
Only laughing at Cæsar, each like a lout,
When hearing me ask if none knew of the name
Which alone on that valley conferr'd such a fame.
Oh, sooth, if you want me to tell my whole mind,
In Germany interest of all sorts you find,
So pray don't conclude that I want your true taste
For the reason that I have to pass on with haste.
These falcon-like knights in the ages of yore
Have left of wild legends a curious store,
Which no Mediævalist e'er will disdain,
So render me justice and do not complain;
Read Voght, Hugo, others, but let me proceed;
Of grand Tourists' language I've surely no need.
From cold of the weather I suffer'd defeat
Through having no stockings to put on my feet;

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For when you keep walking on every day,
At last and at length they quite vanish away.
But so 'tis with much that we value and prize,
The manner of parting creates great surprise;
You say, they will last; they will never be done;
But soon, lo and behold, you find them clean gone.
With coat fit for summer, and rents in my shirt,
No soles to my Bluchers, to keep out the dirt;
Quite smart in appearance, though ragged within,
No hard job it was for the weather to win.
So all through this want, as I said, of whole hose,
The mischief was greater than you might suppose.
But now that the sneezes and shivers are o'er,
I hope for a warmer though duskier shore.
Yet ah! what of harm in all the cold air,
If one can remember the mirth of the fair?
But birds can fly over and hope soon to see
And enjoy what now is not granted to me.
But, swallow, remember my wishes to bear
To those who still truthful and earnest are there,
That they may see years which are peaceful and bright,
With nothing to grieve or to weary their sight;
Serener and clearer each day to the last,
Till all that can trouble be banish'd and past,
With nothing remaining below or above
But the way to that realm where living is love.

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TO THE SAME, FROM PARIS.

D'Esgrigny dear, I got your letter,
And consequently felt much better;
But plainly I was very ill,
Call it the *grippe* or what you will.
However now the worst is past,
And so I run or walk as fast
As when of old both you and I
Ran through the vales and mountains high;
Through Montmorency took our way,
On D'Enghien's lake had such rare play,
Canter'd through woods, with all the crew
That in dear Bailly's school we knew.
But since you still are pleased to say
That now and then you like my way
Of sending you a merry song,
Such as to friendship does belong,
I sit me down in heavenly fields
And sing as inspiration yields,
A power from the Champs Elysées,
To tell you all I know from hearsay;
And if I have become a poet,
I swear it is to you I owe it.
But first and foremost I premise
What need not fill you with surprise,
That I find mix'd with good some ill,
Aye, and enough this page to fill.

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For all the world seems here combined,
Some flaw, some spot, some stain to find
In every one that I admired,
Till with their tales I'm fairly tired.
I swear that I do not invent,
But only to the truth give vent.
With arms across upon their breast,
Pure fame-destruction is their rest;
From heights of a conceited mind
They look down on the human kind.
Then some would all men have agree
With their own party theory.
Like amateurs of tulips rare,
None others will they even spare;
Though beauteous to the common eye,
Yet all their merit these deny;
So tread upon their worthless head!
Yes, trample on them all! is said.
But this one you will not exclude?
They care not if you think them rude;
They're all indulgence, but still there
They can't except it at your prayer.
You praise its colours and its grace;
Their foot has left of it no trace.
Here thus is one I love and know;
Another finds him but so-so.
I speak of those I thought were friends;
Aye, but I hear all that depends
Upon my own interpretation
Of what implies such reputation.

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The fact, I hear, is that they're foes,
Smelt to be such by every nose.
Then I extol some honest youth;
Yes, but I'm warnèd of the "*truth*"
That he is subject to a spell
Of something far too bad to tell.
Where, they ask me, is the hardship
When you cut with all such friendship?
I speak of authors, Frenchmen too,
Who I so wish were known to you!
I mean the men themselves, as well
As their loved writings which I spell.
All nonsense! animals, mere brutes;
Friendship with such men never suits;
And if I've seen them on the sly,
Then I must old friends wish good-bye.
'Tis proof I am not of their sort,
Since to these monsters I resort.
I praise their wit, their depth, their style;
Their fellow-countrymen revile
Their books, their persons, and their name,
For no true cause, but all the same.
That some are evil I admit;
But even here I'll try to hit
The medium just 'twixt all admiring,
And branding all as food for firing.
For genius, whatsoe'er you say,
Leaves beauties that will ever stay,
And 'tis not wise, as I suppose,
To leave them always to your foes.

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I've ever thought that we should use
The very things we most abuse,
Just as Doctors give us poison
For certain ends they can rely on,
And name it too quite fearlessly,
A lesson both for you and me.
But here men flame up with blue fire
If even beauties you admire,
Where the object is not best
And hideous spots defile the rest.
I wish they could be cool and just,
And not their fervour always trust.
In England to be this we try;
With us in this I wish they'd vie,
For 'tis not tenderness of faith
That makes them fulminate such scathe,
'Tis want of equity in mind
That will not gold with refuse find.
But once upon this road intent,
On still worse issues they are bent.
For where their authors are polite,
These critics still will snarl and bite.
A shade of difference suffices
To call forth all their stern devices;
They shake their head, they toss their chin,
They hint there's somewhat wrong within,
Although it be men grave and holy
And to the Church devoted wholly.
Some think, that praise is want of wit;
So faults they find in all that's writ:

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They think that showing what's to blame
Will constitute itself a name.
I say it without flattery,
Give me the court, not pedantry;
For no one robs you there of thought;
You're there by contrasts better taught.
I know when all must be admired
That sometimes even I get tired.
But still I must despise and hate
This endless passion for debate,
To give it but the gentlest name
When used all authors to defame,—
These ways which seem to other nations
Like those denounced to the Galatians,
When Paul advised them all to walk
With no vain glory in their talk;
Not provoking one another
With envy brotherhood to smother;
But when observing any fault
To be still gentle in their thought,
With a sweet and courteous spirit
To instruct, not heed demerit,
Rememb'ring that no man can be
From all temptation ever free;
Concluding with that noble word
Which makes their harshness so absurd.
Thus "lend a hand to all and each,
And you fulfil what Christ did teach.
For each is nothing, though he thinks
That he's the man who never sinks,

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Deceiving then his own vain mind,
Unjust to others and unkind."
Right *curious* is it thus to see
How fresh is Christianity!
Thus armèd, to obtusest view,
Against all faults both old and new,
To-day as useful for each man
As when its great course first began;
Adapted to Parisians here
To change their anger to a tear.
But put we off to other season
What here's thought neither rhyme nor reason.
Of course there's cause to feel displeasure
When they simply use their measure.
Alas! when into hearts we pry,
We always some defect can spy:
That none are perfect is confess'd,
That evil must still stain the best.
When all our passions have been spilt,
There's no one doubtless free from guilt.
Though still with Swift I sometimes think,
Just when I feel my courage sink,
'Tis with religion as with love,—
Dissembling first, they later prove
Really, what you've ne'er expected,
Fit to be by all respected.
But give me her or else "the feller"
Who of your faults is not the teller.
Avaunt the wretch who spatters so
The dirt on all I love and know.

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'Tis true, in this I plead for self,
Who am a silly, sorry elf.
I know both you and yours defy
The keenest, sharpest scrutiny;
But still you will agree with me,
And rather what is pleasant see
In those of whom you read or hear,
Who to your mind must still be dear.
Then too, again, I must confess
There's here excessive love of dress.
In London, dearest of all towns,
Eyes take you more than showy gowns.
For eyes with us have nothing stern,
From which plain fact there's much to learn:
In truth, a certain beauty reigns
That can dispense with all these pains.
Its common people are less knowing
Than there where mischief's ever sowing.
A dash of childhood in the low
Shows they will not imperious grow.
You mark an innocence of face
And mind of which that is the trace,
Comparative, of course, I mean,
For faults enough are plainly seen.
But if you let me tell my mind,
Its very stones to me seem kind.
Excuse this little fond digression
Upon the fashion of our nation;
Although I know with you are found
What here we prize on British ground.

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At Pouliguen I learn'd to see
What dearest always is to me—
That gaiety and truth express'd
Are better far than all the rest.
Oh! give me music, fancy bright,
For that is what exceeds the might
Of all this show and all this glitter,
Of which the end is often bitter.
But now to come to lower things,
And still tell what my censure brings.
There's an aping of the English;
It meets you in the very dish.
The mustard yellow, greens *à l'eau*,
I cannot bear to find it so.
No Englishman at least should dare
To revolutionize your fare.
Pride too begins to wear a face
That used not to be in your race.
For France was graceful, ever free,
And loved your true *égalité*.
I hate exclusiveness—that air
So doubly hideous in the fair.
I hate whatever is not mild,
And such as can delight the child;
And I prefer to laugh and romp
Far from the haunts of all this pomp.
Methinks, moreover, I can see
What comes much nearer too to me,
That social ease and *seats* diminish,
If nothing else were said to perish.

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I swear I walk about this town
And find no bench to sit me down,
Such as of old at every turn
You found when your poor feet did burn.
But now half's said I had to say,
The rest you'll hear another day;
For I am not so dull a fool,
Of Anglo-mania such a tool,
As not to find your Paris still
A theme for the most noble quill
To spend itself in warmest praises,
Of what the spirit ever raises
To such a rapture of delight
As must entrance the dullest wight
Who ever thought to wield a quill
A useful purpose to fulfil.
Bright city, where a life of ease
You pass, with nothing to displease;
Where life is sweet and death is well,
As blessèd ends so often tell;
Where happiness is needed not,
If only you can see the spot;
As of great Athens we are told
That all men used to say of old:
City still wishing to preserve
A medium just, and never swerve
From what is good, polite, and free,
Though all it cannot make agree;
When erring, still with honest will,
Extremes it shows of good and ill.

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Inhaling knowledge with the air
Of what to know, it does not dare
To make profession absolute,
Though what is false it can refute.
A town ignoring all constraint,
Of servitude without a taint,
Where each can solitary be,
Or find with ease society.
Just as he likes, it's far off wide,
Or, when he wishes, at his side.
To-day a hermit all alone,
To-morrow quite a dandy grown;
While all that can inspire talk
Is found within a morning's walk.
A town with wisdom of its own,
Which gives to industry a tone
Of ease, and grace, and jollity,
Proclaiming each one truly free;
Rapid and ready teaching man
Aye to be happy when he can;
So finding in an hour of sun
Enough to please when all is done.
Sainte Beuve has said the same in prose,
As each who reads his "Mondays" knows.
But I, who find it strictly true,
Direct it wing'd with verse to you.
Adieu, my sweet and dearest friends,
And take what now your poet sends;
In one sense "your," to be exact,
Since such you made me is the fact:

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" Attempts at doggrel," though the name,
When all things have their proper fame,
And " by a late beginner " too;
But, then, who set me going? You.
'Tis rude and homely, but I fain
Would think that you will not disdain;
And if you read it as 'twas meant,
Then crown'd will be my sole intent.

TO THE SAME, FROM PARIS.

In silence deep my friend has heard me try
Some flaws in France's blazon to descry;
Specks that exist I thought it right to blame
Without a wish its glory to defame;
But here the way before me opens bright,
And what I love alone now meets my sight.
Resuming, then, my song, I hope to hear
Some plaudits which to poets must be dear,
At least some words in haste and friendship toss'd
To make me sure the former was not lost.
In all things, then, philosophers will own
By contrasts that each grace is clearest shown.
The French, I know, can win you at first sight,
And make you feel that much with them is right;
That what took place in ages like the last
Must have been wrought by spirits long since past;
The page of La Rochejaquelin will stand,
But *Blues* are beings we can't understand;

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While poor Marigny by companions slain
Has left no side entitled to complain.
Enough—such visions may invade us all
When Faith departing, nature's graces fall.
The French before you have that air and face
In which these horrors have not left a trace.
Gentle, humane, kind-hearted too, and just,
Their presence fills you with esteem and trust.
Still if their virtues you would clearer see,
Visit Italians, Swiss, and Germany.
Pray don't begin to laugh now at my rhymes,
They're not pedantic, which in these our times
Is something that should always favour curry,
Though to condemn you might be in a hurry.
But what is it in France I like so well?
That is what now I am about to tell.
The people here, I mean the lower sort,
Seem always ready for a bit of sport.
To jokes and smiles they're ready to respond;
Their cheerfulness can cheer when you despond.
In Germany, when walking through their towns,
For jokes and smiles I met with only frowns.
Pooh! say you, I could not speak Teutonic;
But then have eyes and lips no secret trick
To snap at jests without the use of speech,
When things are palpable, within the reach
Of all whose hearts are light and fancies gay,
And no one cares what tongues might have to say?
These juveniles in France are like our own,
Arch in their manners, gentle in their tone.

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I swear these Paris gamins take me quite,
And I'll stick up for them with all my might.
'Twas but the other day I had a trial
Of their fine spirit in the Palais "Ryal."
I saw an urchin looks of longing cast
Upon a toy-boat furnish'd with a mast,—
I then was reading, leaning on the wall
Wherein the shopman had his little stall,—
"Go in," said I, "and buy it," to the boy.
I wish you'd only seen his lively joy.
"Stop there," he cried. "Be sure don't go away
Until I'm back; you won't have long to stay,"
And sure enough, quite breathless from the streets,
Bearing a tiny bottle full of sweets,
He comes and says, "Pray take this for my sake.
Now come and see me launch upon the lake
The darling boat,—so kind it is of you!"
And yet the boat had only cost six sous.
Friend, if the bottle only you could see,
You would not look so sore displeased at me.
The verse perhaps would suit a fairy's song,
Which, like that flask, is never over long.
Another feature, seen in young and old,
Often remark'd, but here it must be told,
That which I cannot honestly pass by,
Is their unwearied, kind civility.
All this, you say, refers but to the throng
Of those you heed not, as beneath a song.
What have I seen of good in higher classes?
Well, there I mark'd what far all this surpasses.

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For not to speak of grace and gentle ways
Such as enough you cannot ever praise,
You find annex'd a faith in things divine,
Which makes their grace and gentleness to shine
Above all gems that lordlings like to view,
And even beauty with these great airs new.
Alas! that beauty in some English fair
Should waste its charms when faith is not found there!
Alas! that the noble, gen'rous, and kind,
Should want the truth that can exalt the mind
Above the trammels of the world so vain
Which Christian Catholics alone disdain!
England may boast of her baronial hall:
Where faith is wanting, what is wanted? All.
Give me the fair, in high or low degree,
Believing, loving, more than they can see.
Our low unknown are join'd in sundry ways
To mystic chains that can their nature raise.
But here, you know, we speak of those in station,
Such as denotes the noble of the nation.
And so whate'er these do—talk, pray, or dance—
The palm, I fear, must still belong to France.
I will not sing of arts and cities bright,
That teach the mind and captivate the sight;
I will not sing of temples grave, august,
Embodied truths in which we b'lieve and trust.
But who proceeds and yet neglects to name
That priesthood meriting eternal fame?
Learn'd without pride, so gay yet pensive, grave,
Intently wishing men to teach and save;

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Prudent to check of youth the fiery zeal,
To seek of kingdoms, families, the weal;
Replete with all the truths that can inspire,
But dreading, cooling the fanatic's fire;
Teaching the young their duties to fulfil,
Seeing in nature's laws of God the will;
Friends and defenders of all social ties,
Foes but to error which their bond defies;
Calm and considerate, dead to int'rest vile;
Keen to detect what serves but to beguile;
So anxious that of each the lamp should shine
That sweetens life and makes it all divine.
To praise them fitly never can belong
To those who warble such a childlike song.
An English hero with our Shakspeare found,
Return'd from visits long to Gallic ground,
Has only praise for what he witness'd there,
And hopes again, and quickly to repair
To that fair France which suited him so well,
And still attracted by a potent spell.
Shall I, then, merit blame when I agree
With what was thought by English chivalry?
No; but our country ever will rejoice
When it hears truth, though from an humble voice.
Friends and allies, we love the French at last;
Interests are one, and enmities are past.
The song has ceased, and now I must retire
To brood or sleep before a sea-coal fire.
Can I forget the evening of that day
When at St. Nazaire ends the iron way?

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Your carriage sent some eighteen weary miles;
Your letter, from your coachman's hand with smiles,
To greet our coming, which you call'd a boon?
We tried our best, assisted by the moon,
To read the missive, herald of your grace.
But this is all inherent in your race;
Keeping up customs, gentle, noble, kind,
That show the courteous and the polish'd mind.
Can I forget the beacon lit with fire,
To cheer our eyes when now we had come nigher?
The drive through portals opening at last,
When all the perils of the night were past?
Can I forget that meeting on the stairs,
When rushing down them D'Esgrigny repairs
To grasp our hands, with words the sweetest, best,
Excusing young ones Midnight sent to rest?
No, my true friend, my schoolmate, and my brother,
But you, like myself, had learn'd to play the lover.
Well, as I said already, all is past!
Sweet days like these for me could never last.
The summer gone, the autumn bids adieu;
In mind alone are Pouliguen and you.
Hope bids me think of other future days,
But gratitude demands meanwhile these lays.
I saw, I heard, I mark'd, and I admired
What to see, hear, and mark, one's never tired.
You gave the key-note when we reach'd your ground;
To you the praise, if aught of sweet be found
In these poor chants, that seek to please the ear
While sounding what to all men should be dear.

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TO AMBROSE PHILLIPPS DE L'ISLE, Esq.

OF GARENDON PARK.—FROM PARIS.

De L'Isle, my dear, you need be told,
Though you may think me over bold,
That, when a friend we bear in mind,
To write to him is only kind.
When one is absent far away,
There should be somewhat still to say;
You must not silence thus prolong;
At least I'll break it with a song,
And send you something of my scrawl,
Which must calligraphy appal.
First I had writ a single P,
But then, the fact is, as you see,
That every word quite right to spell
Is what I never learnèd well.
My last was grave enough to vex
Those near you of the gentler sex.
I send you now some simple fun,
With no great wit too finely spun.
No laurels on my brow I wear;
I've no conceits to make you stare;
But to write verses I have taken,
In hopes your idleship to waken.

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I fancy 'tis the only time
That I have bored you with my rhyme.
Though now if laugh'd at for my pains,
Why, this is what Reviews sustains.
Songsters like me should be quite dear
To satirists both far and near;
To those who love to mock and criticize,
And prove us all to be not over wise.
Here, then, is one for such a claw,
A thrush for you, for it a daw.
Well, but now gravely let me see
What I have got to say to thee;
Yes, got; 'tis short, but what of that?
To lips like mine it comes so pat.
Then first and foremost we have here
A crowd of friends both old and dear.
In fact, society demands
So many visits at our hands;
So many cards, so many notes,
To people on whom Mary dotes;
So many charming rendezvouses
Which must be kept whate'er one chooses,
That I begin to think it best
To deem the whole a very pest,
To kill the time, that gift so high,
The loss of which should make us sigh.
In London, people never think
Of others when their spirits sink.
They know you live from year to year,
And never call to show you clear

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That they would comfort your poor heart,
And some short passing joy impart.
Of course this proves their solid sense,
Which deems politeness mere pretence,
A waste of time not meant for fools,
But to be spent in sterner schools,
In gaining int'rest, high connexions;
To all things else there are objections.
But here are folks of other hue,
Who never have enough of you.
So "Dine with me," or "Come to tea,"
And "Jolly comrades let us be,"
Is what we hear from day to day;
For this is the Parisian way
With people in whose veins does flow
Crusaders' blood; yes, even so;
Who to no others ever yield
In glory both of courts and field.
I said our friends were old and tried;
But still it must not be denied
That some of them are yet but new,
Although 'tis clear they're very true.
The long and short of all this stuff
Is that of friends we've here enough,
While London offers you a roof
That is against the weather proof.
Alas! how distant and how cold
Are some that I knew there of old!
How little like these French so bright,
Who cannot let you out of sight,

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As if they thought that you must be
Their friend for all eternity!
Well, to descend to lower things,
And at mere trifles have some flings;
For trifles mere are what relate
To that conceived within our pate
About ourselves and projects wise,
When each to mould the future tries.
We hope to be in London town,
However spirits may sink down,
When thrice November sees the world
About the sun in circle whirl'd.
Here we must stop to keep the day
When Christians for the dead do pray.
Alas! ourselves with mem'ries fond
Might even here almost despond,
If there were not at times in sight
A faith, and hope, and custom bright,
To banish all the dreary leaven
Which keeps off thoughts of joy in heaven.
So, when the Church has set us free,
We mean to use our liberty,
And fly back to our English home,
No more, at least this year, to roam.
But meanwhile I suppose you'll write
To make the matter now all right.
Though, if you do not seem inclined,
Still I'll believe you true and kind.
So do not bother much yourself;
Of old I know you, idle elf,

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Keep in your "long" and unknown "cliff."
All right! I'll only take a whiff
And feel quite merry with the smoke,
Without a thought you to provoke.
Commend me, then, to one and all
That cheer your old ancestral hall,
And pray accept my saucy folly,
Meant but to cure my melancholy.
The thought of friends is always bright,
However far they're out of sight.
I knew not when I first began,
Whether, like Pomponius' man,
I should write quite *rusticatim*,
Or touch subjects *urbanitim*.
I had, like clowns, some truth to tell;
What's "city-like" you love not well.
However, I have tried to be
Polite and yet bold-spoken, free.
You'll laugh at rhymes as coarse as these,
So show them not to critics, please.
Though what care I? they suit my vein:
Let all good-natured folks complain,
Pretend to sigh, uplift their eyes,
And murmur out their kind surprise.
I grant I feel not quite so great
As Cæsar, who disdain'd to hate
Those who of him would vilely prate;
Yet, in this point, the same as he
In not much heeding calumny;
'Tis better they should me defame;
They'll have to spare some other name.

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ALL-HALLOWS EVE AT PARIS.

THE year declining, once again comes round
The day when joy and sorrow both are found.
All-Hallows Eve should call us to the wood,
Where mental charms are felt and understood.
In woods great poets, since began their race,
Had visions which no time can e'er efface;
As when through waving branches gliding stole
Women, of whom old Dante saw the soul.
With beauty trees and paths continue clad;
Though somewhat in the air a little sad
Whispers of what the winter will unfold,
Of things besides too plaintive to be told.
Woods late in autumn have a mystic tone
That seems inexplicable heard alone.
To fields, and groves, and fading leaves each day
Imparts anew a sign of their decay.
From depths untrodden, hidden from your eyes,
Issues a sound to fill you with surprise.
Dry branches, falling leaves, and other things
That seem to live and dread what winter brings,
Do form a kind of plaintive lamentation,
And raise a solemn, fearful admiration.
Sighs, too, and groans, as if from voice unknown,
Create a rumour to which minds are prone

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To listen with a secret shuddering fear,
As if it threaten'd something coming near
To grieve the eyes and sadden lively hearts,
Though still sublime are thoughts that it imparts.
Strange deaden'd echoes pass through forests old,
And all perceive that something's to be told
To raise our hearts above contracted span,
And visions high communicate to man.
To-morrow, and these voices calm and still
Must yield to crowds that all the churches fill.
The choirs solemn and the grave-yards nigh
Will chant glad hymns and prompt the wonted sigh.
'Tis well, as yet, while feeling all alone,
Some chords to touch that raise a mingled tone
Of hope and sadness as befits the time,
Apt to respond to harmonies of rhyme.
And first, how joyous is the coming day
That tells of those to heaven pass'd away!
Oh! what a thought, that those so known and dear
Have found their all, and ceased to shed a tear!
Jane and Letitia, Fanny and our boy,
With God are now, where lasting is the joy:
Where nothing changes, nothing grows less bright,
Though all is wonder through excess of light.
The grandmother, whose wisdom and whose care
Form'd them for bliss before they were aware,
Is seen to greet them with that holy love
Which blessèd souls receive from those above.
D'Esgrigny, too, thy René floats through air,
Soaring with angels ever bright and fair.

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Oh, what a thought! that those who this earth trod
Are now for ever safe, enjoying God!
And then, to think of that great glorious throng
Which to all ages of the world belong;
That pass'd through life like fires from on high,
Directing man to joys that never die!
All that once troubled felt by them no more;
In action rest, their science to adore!
But now the past with other thoughts comes back;
The hymn will cease, the altar put on black.
Oh! there's a thought that must be so express'd,
'Tis that we wish for all eternal rest!
The vespers of the dead will then be sung;
The solemn, deep-toned bells will then be rung;
With crowds we'll take the now frequented way,
And over graves and tombs behold them pray.
Oh! the cold hardness of that darksome mind,
That what is needless here can only find!
For life will have in memory a store
Of those who loved, yet wanted mercy more;
Since love itself with sick and feeble wing
Can scarcely reach the heights where angels sing,
Unless its sweet plumes drawn from what repairs
Our nature's frailty, needed not our prayers.
If prayer, then, 's wanted for the brave and dear,
Think you that others have no cause for fear?
And so we ask the mercy from on high
Needed by all men when they come to die.
Then let me sing of youths, the pride and boast
Of holy mothers, loving them the most;

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The first to think what's noble, and to dare;
The first to win the praises of the fair;
Children in heart, though in their stature men;
Pleasing to saints, a theme for poet's pen.
With lips quite fresh from life's enchanting taste,
They prompt our prayers, and seem to bid us haste.
How many others, prudent, aged, and wise,
Who yet had failings that could more surprise!
So few are those in whom no eye detects
What to our judgment even seem defects,
That must impede their flight to what they view'd
Alone, perhaps, with cold solicitude.
Visions, again, that tender souls will quell,
Are those of some who loved, alas! too well,
Of sprightly creatures yearning for the sky,
Yet ill prepared to lay them down to die;
Ensnared, benetted in the worst of toils
That life embitters, spirit even soils;
Wishing to gain some port without laments,
Safe from the snare that pleases and torments;
Fairy-like, sylphic, bright as opening day,
Yet wishing still to leave and pass away,
As if no hope of happiness were here;
As if was felt the worst that they could fear.
They pass, they leave a world of mourning friends;
Their part is play'd on earth, their drama ends.
Oh! with what depth the solemn bell will sound,
Recalling these who are no longer found,
Where once they grew like lilies of the field,
That every charm and every grace could yield!

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Nature itself attests the need of prayer.
Behold their grave; its truest object, there.
Thus, amidst scenes that speak of death and woe,
A poet finds that sweet pale flowers grow.
The yarn is mingled of our human tale,
With tints of brightness and a neutral pale.
Graves even bid us never to despond
Like those whose memories are only fond;
And so are seen in one connected view
The mystic visions each year must renew—
Unceasing glory, victory secure,
A blissful hope though wants may still endure,
Aid from the highest mansion of the blest,
Prayers for those needing still the wish'd-for rest.
Thus are conjoin'd in threefold mystic file
Those who remain upon this earth awhile,
And those unseen who leave the mortal shore,
Their final state secure, for evermore.
The one remain for action, and still free
To mould, as if their own, eternity;
The others parted, but to meet again
When vanish'd will be every earthly stain.
But shades are rising to the branches high,
Though rosy splendour tints the evening sky.
Lonely straying, glad while feeling sorrow,
Prepares the mind for what will come to-morrow.
Churches and tombs, with faith, will never tire,
Yet woods have somewhat thus that can inspire.
This old plain chant of oaks and falling leaves
From thoughts too deep the mind sometimes relieves,

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Chases dull stagnant vapours from the soul;
And, lost in things unwholesome, thence they roll.
The Church alludes to trees and foliage bright
While singing lessons for this very night;
The leaves are dancing to a plaintive song,
Which can the high solemnity prolong.
To nature thus religion calls the mind,
And in the whole an emblem bids it find,
Which smiles on man while pointing to the sky,
Where is no withering like leaves, to die.

ALL SOULS.

THERE'S a race that we love, though it thinks it can soar
Above truths that it held to in ages of yore.
We deem it pretension; and we judge from its acts;
Let us single but one out of numberless facts,

Not confined to the circle which doubts or denies
That a prayer can be needed when any one dies,
But e'en showing this error extending as wide
As the nation renouncing the primitive side.

'Tis the day of the dead, it was once here well known;
Yes, but then all such fancies have hence long since flown.
For religion reformèd is now far too wise
To demand of our time such a fond sacrifice.

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For suppressing the custom, this way is the first;
But then who can feel certain that it is the worst?
Although heads remain firm, one quickly discovers
That hearts pretty nearly agree with the others.

'Tis the day of the dead, and it comes once a year,
But sooth few are now found to attend to it here.
For some are too busy, aye with too much in hand,
To suppose that a moment they have at command.

And there's always some pressure on that very day,
Which must keep both the busy and idle away;
Our profession, affairs, visits—these are supreme—
And to think of suspending them, merely a dream.

'Tis the day of the dead, and it comes with the cold,
With the fall of the leaf and the soft drench'd black mould;
The long damp waving grass and the tall dripping trees
Would do quite as much hurt as the wild wintry breeze.

'Tis the day of the dead, and long has it gone by;
Mediævalists only can like thus to sigh:
If you will talk and have us both pray and so feel,
'Tis in warm and gay churches we should all of us kneel.

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For what can one place be now more than another,
Unless superstition your reason will smother?
These old customs romantic and certainly wild
Belong to the vulgar far too often beguiled.

'Tis the day of the dead—'tis the day of the Priests;
Do let them then observe it with other dull feasts;
'Tis all bosh, be assured, lad, till noon we must sleep;
Let some muffs and our sisters go pray and go weep.

'Tis the day of the dead, but then what would they say
Who might hear that through graves thus we too would stray?
You and I, my good friend, must now be like others,
However thus any one talks on and bothers.

'Tis the day of the dead—but yet no great bell sounds
To invite us in thought from our brief earthly bounds:
Through the streets one runs hastening, another one stays;
All for business or pleasure; in brief no one prays.

Oh! England, that once wert believing and holy,
So free too from Pagan-like dull melancholy,
Aye so quick to attend to religion's great voice,
Inviting gravely to mourn or gladly rejoice,

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Just behold thy graves now left so lonely ever!
With the tears of fond memory on them never!
So deserted by all their surviving best friends:
And you'll see at least here where thy long boasting ends.

But the scene changes now to a different shore,
Where religion exists as in ages of yore,
Where no one pretends that men are not clever,
The true and the false to distinguish and sever.

'Tis the day of the dead, and it comes once a year:
The crowds are now moving, none ashamed to appear.
So the busiest men all engaged in their trade
Leave their shops and their ledgers, and thoughtful are made.

The statesman, the senator, the great and the small,
View the spot loved by each one, and kneeling down fall,
Yet at home much to do! constant work for their head!
But now all is forgotten excepting the dead.

Then the maiden so pale, and the old pensive sire,
With the youth for the day free, in deep black attire,
The widow, the orphan, and the sempstress so shy,
Gently pass to the spot where their loved ones still lie.

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The little one grasping, and with such a tight hold,
The frock of sweet sissy, who herself's not too bold;
Though all walk on in order like relatives dear,
By their looks even charity letting appear.

Then some strew their pale flowers, and some light
the lamp,
Unlocking in silence the cold monument damp,
And some kneel like mute statues, and others stray on,
And all love to linger, and thence none will be gone.

There is woodbine that flourishes best o'er a grave;
Each alley, death's violets—Pervenche—will pave;
Poet's fictions of worms all engender'd below
Yield to wreaths of immortals which friends will
bestow.

'Tis the day of the dead; it comes bright or comes
cold,
But all are not nervous like some timid and old;
The slopes amid flowers, and the high stirring
breeze,
Have enchantment for him who both feels and who
sees.

So the tortuous path and the dark cypress spire,
He will follow half pleased, e'en, and he will
admire;
The tombs shining graceful, or the green mossy sod—
Oh, how all of these lift up his heart unto God!

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The day of the dead—to our old faith we owe it;
Both dear to the Christian and dear to the poet.
Our fathers they taught us on the graves thus to stray,
Although still in the churches each morning we pray.

And the men of our age with their courage so high,
Have yet time thus, and hearts too, to breathe a soft sigh.
And let no one suppose we are sorrowful made
By wandering so thoughtful through this peaceful shade.

'Tis the day of the dead, and the day of each home,
While recalling each household, wherever we roam;
'Tis the day of our fathers, of sons, and of brothers,
The day of our sisters so fond, and of mothers.

'Tis the day for the young, for the old, and for all,
And which needs not of priests the particular call.
Thus domestic, ancestral, the day has its claims
Still on every being who human remains.

See whole families walk in the groups as they pass.
Do they weep for a brother, a boy, or a lass?
Do they think of a mother, a sister, or bride?
Oh, then mark with what pains will they seek tears to hide!

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And when now fresh processions are seen to arrive,
What a sympathy moves all the rest who survive!
During eight days, from morning till evening 'tis so,
And all raise up to Heaven the hearts from below.

'Tis the day of the dead, and here no one is found
To take his way reckless to a different ground;
It is known, and respected, and honour'd here still,
By all those who have even the faintest weak will

Thus to follow the customs so closely allied
With the faith of the Church that is elsewhere denied;
For the worst and most thoughtless, the wildest here then
Will remember that they too are mortal and men.

'Tis the day of the dead—and it is not gone by,
As in nations so vain that will proudly deny
The deep, old, and true faith that can make so agree,
True religion most pure with all humanity.

'Tis the day of the dead, do you hear the strange bell?
Hark! it tolls thus all day, through the night too as well:
The guards are there mounted to keep the long way,
Such vast multitudes hasten to weep and to pray.

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O then France, sprightly France, still so faithful and true
To defend what thy fathers all believed in and knew,
With soft hearts that are warm, and aye kindled with light,
The same that dispell'd once the old sad Pagan night,

Now behold thy deck'd graves thus from year unto year,
So bedew'd and refresh'd with the poor grateful tear,
Thus frequented at times as the sweetest of fields,
And see there what good fruits now thy old faith still yields.

Thou art praised for thy science, thy art, and thy grace,
For the courage so high that belongs to thy race,
But when all is admired, and all has been said,
There is nothing surpasses thy love for the dead.

WE ARE LEAVING.

Why wears your face that pensive air?
Have future days no hope for you?
What is the sorrow? what the care
That makes you droop to outward view?

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I can no special reason weave
To justify such alter'd tone,
But that to-morrow we must leave;
The word itself is grief alone.

We leave—then we shall cease to see
What pleased, what pleases still our eye,—
Then is not that enough to be
A grief for our mortality?

But no, the feeling is absurd:
We leave, but not that which is true;
For often, Mary, we have heard
That all is seen with inward view.

In mind then nothing will be left;
There all that pleased us still can be;
Of nothing are we e'er bereft,
Since with the mental eyes we see.

Come then, prepare, we cannot stay;
But grieve your heart so, O pray never;
For with ourselves we take away
That which no space from us can sever.

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THE REMEDY FOR HUMAN SADNESS.

On human sadness clever men now write[1];
Their very title fills one with affright.
The thing exists, of course, there's no denying;
How else explain this dull continued sighing,
From hearing which there's no man who can fly,
While clad in garb of our mortality?
But why not write, or better, why not sing,
To show us how the mind can gain a wing
Wherewith to soar above these vapours vain,
Which cause our race to murmur and complain?
Since nothing sweeter can be understood,
For minds and hearts that seek their real good.
Horace himself, as Julius Janin shows[2],
In many poems does but thus exposé
The 'De Officiis,' that matchless page,
The highest flight of wisdom in a sage,
Though critics, proud and shallow, had the face
To say of Cicero they find no trace
In all the songs of that most gracious bard;
Then surely, surely it is rather hard
To blame me now for uttering in song
What to far higher wisdom does belong?

[1] La tristesse humaine.
[2] La Poésie et l'Eloquence à Rome au Temps des Césars.

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Deep Joubert likes philosophy when bred
Not to march always as a quadruped;
Yes, wing'd, he says, and singing it must be,
If e'er it would address itself to me.
Many to poetry by truth have pass'd,
And some by poetry to truth at last.
To banish grief is happy to be made,
Whether without or with the Muses' aid:
Though here in sooth I'd send the Nine a-packing,
As feeling sure we do not need their backing;
Your solemn poets need must them invoke
Unless prepared Parnassus to provoke.
But with such prayers if we were to begin,
The name of pedants we should justly win:
However, hating needless innovation,
As fitting only some wild savage nation,
'Tis best, perhaps, of what is old though vain
At first not quite so rudely to complain.
I wish these Muses had not cross'd my mind;
Here, in good truth, I would not you should find
A forward, saucy, barbarous affront,
As if to vex had always been my wont.
Peace be with them; I only say adieu,
And turn at once to what is simply true,
But lovely too and able to inspire
The softest, noblest tones from poet's lyre,
Sublime yet cordial, holy yet quite free
From what can startle poor humanity.
So that the song, while raising up the heart
To heights empyreal, will be found in part

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Playful and lightsome, such as fits the gay
When only bent on a bright holiday.
Ah! why should truths that aye concern us most
Be always deck'd out grave, like those who boast
Of what the outside covering displays,
While proving only their own pedant ways?
Give me the man or woman who likes best
The purely good, however it be dress'd;
Give me the heart that rises to the skies
At sounds which such dull gravity defies.
The twinkling feet, the sprightly song can raise
Their soul to give the great Creator praise.
But now to come to where we first began,
And show the cure for sadness unto man.
Sadness assails him from his early days;
Sadness still hides in all that he surveys;
Sadness awaits the young, the strong, the old,
Sadness, alas! too bitter to be told.
Then who denies to list a simple lay
That to escape its poison shows the way?
Way proved infallible, and therefore best,
To yield for all men happiness and rest,
Means to defy the worst, most fatal sting
That joy to misery can ever bring—
A moral medicine, as when French Ducis,
Sent to Deleyre his own great remedy.
Oh! let us hear the secret we desire
To quell the anguish of this inward fire
Which long no mortal strength can e'er sustain,
While rendering life so wretched and so vain.

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The potent charm which can dissolve the shade
That follows brightness, and that life has made
So little like what first it must have been,
Consists in Love, but that of course I mean,
Which, being infinite, must have for end
Him on whom all his creatures loved depend.
Four letters thus, or as in Latin three,
Express the whole of this great mystery.
Now would you mark how this is always true?
Then follow me and raise your mind to view
Our human life in all its tissue long,
So varied, changeful as in poet's song
From the first figures that the web unfolds,
To the last colour that the eye beholds.
Childhood and youth responsive to the voice
Which teaches mortals ever to rejoice,
Have yet their moments when the sprightly spirit
Yields to the dark dull gloom that we inherit
From those who first embitter'd all the joys
That to uphold His creatures God employs,
Intending them for bliss even here below,
And there above still greater to bestow.
Surprised, afflicted at the novel thought,
Both feel they have not what their hearts have sought—
A joy unchanging, fruitful as their years,
Untroubled transport, passion without fears.
The depth of this experience first no tongue,
No heart can tell: from eyes must then be wrung

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Alone the secret of their inward woes,
The cure for which is what we now propose.
Yes; even here, amidst this first assay
Of human sadness, bright is the glad way
To chase the clouds that darken all the mind;
And that in loving God they're sure to find.
Such love once lighted in the youthful heart,
Sweetness of heaven can, must, and does impart.
The sadness vague which sought no aid from tears
Has vanish'd with their wildness and their fears.
A joy sublime, a goodness, and a thrill
Of bliss unfelt till now, their natures fill.
The dull and silent lad that was before,
Now grieves and moans and frets and sighs no more.
Then later as the latent sap expands
In blossoms, fruits, and each thing that commands
Th' admiring love of those who can respect
All that of mind and goodness is th' effect,
Poetry, art, and love itself, the soul
Of what is good and great, without control,
Conjure up shadows from a dark abyss
To shade and darken all the promised bliss.
Imagination feels this sadness more,
Recalling ever what it can't restore.
Great genius, says Lamartine, is great grief,
Where can it turn to find its true relief?
Alas! we need not here employ our lyre
To sing the melancholy some admire,
Of poets, artists, lovers, left alone,
Without the love of God to give a tone

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To that which by itself can only show
How genius and great thoughts must fill with woe
The hearts of those who love not above all
Him at whose feet true glory bids us fall.
Harold, and Réné, Robert, and the store
In deeper grief of youth all gone before,
Madden'd, despairing, through the mighty grief
Of genius, art, and love, without relief
From the great charm of the love of God,
Proclaim this truth, and even to the sod,
Yield while it covers them, a piercing voice,
Responsive most to those who most rejoice,
To tell to all, the foolish and the wise,
That such results may shock but not surprise
Those who reflect how all of good and great
Have but one way t' escape this cruel fate,
By fixing first their love and their desires
On Him who lasting bliss alone inspires.
That love will raise, sustain the Poet's song,
Will shield high art from all that's sad and wrong,
Will keep the lover constant in his way,
And save his heart from passionless decay.
Sadness of genius, art, of love's own reign,
Will pass and leave no victim to complain.
Void of that love no spirit long can soar,
But all will droop, at least yield joy no more.
But further on, when age is now mature,
Such sadness surely no man need endure,
Who flies the follies of an idle mind,
And learns in action happiness to find!

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See him then, godless, launch'd upon the sea,
Where wealth and fame are sought with industry,
Slave of ambition, glory, grandeur, trade,
Mark how completely wretched life is made.
That power has charms, none surely can deny;
But follow statesmen through their regions high,
And see how sadness slily can await
To glide in quietly and mar their state.
Not all is sunshine on this lofty way,
See unideal, envied Castlereagh
Grasping at death, and that by his own hand,
While England's greatness he could still command.
Councils of state and diplomatic skill
With true contentment hearts can never fill.
See in more recent times, how statesmen hope
To root out faith, and heed not King or Pope,
Heed neither Him on whom all councils wait,
Nor Christian nations, which they seem to hate.
While Popes and laws the minister defies,
The head grows giddy and the creature dies.
Sadness, while each on other lays the blame,
Proves the conclusion of the strife and shame.
But take your instance from the best of days,
When with some real good the int'rest stays.
From Parliaments at times the heart will shrink
To look for youth's fine visions, and to think.
Still the result is sadness; at the best
There is a want of something to give rest
To that which always seeks a higher good
Than what by policy is understood.

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The sadness which a public life has brought
Yields when of what we owe to God is thought.
The schemes, the motives, and the whole great plan,
To mould the future for the good of man,
Will then be changed for what can be combined
With love of God and love of human kind.
Then instant joy and peace will fill the breast,
The statesman glory and the man find rest.
Look, now, to wars, and battles, and alarms,
Where kings and generals find boasted charms;
Though even there the tears of Xerxes can
Proclaim what's wanting to the hero-man.
Yes; tears and inward sorrow more profound
In every generous soil will then be found;
Whole armies perish, victory is gain'd,
But the shock'd soul has need to be sustain'd
By something more than nations can bestow,
When with a patriot's zeal all bosoms glow.
The eye that's witness'd carnage on the field,
The deadly horrors that fierce passions yield,
Will turn at times with anguish and dismay
To scenes of love, in that celestial day,
Where joy divine defies all other might,
And makes a world where all that is is right.
The gloom has fled—the bitterness is past—
Duty is done, but man loves God at last;
And so his thoughts, his love, are in the sky,
No more consorting with man's cruelty.
The tears of warriors mingle with the strain
Of all forgiven, and of those who gain

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By loving God the joy of lasting rest—
The peace, the bliss of heaven in the breast.
Then, what has life professional to show,
But disappointments ever, sometimes woe?
Sadness attending the protracted suit;
Where anger rankles, charity is mute;
Sadness, when malady all skill defies,
The treatment right, though still the patient dies.
Let but the love of God inflame the mind,
The school grows wiser and the lawyer kind;
Physicians then have faith their minds to raise,
Like other men, for all events to praise
Him on whose will each circumstance must wait
To change or modify of man the fate.
Sciolists talk, anatomize in vain,
Dupuytren finds in death his greatest gain.
Then counsel, judges, all who must resort
To chambers, juries, and the inns of court,
Find that if peace the world thus still denies,
Its sweet reward the love of God supplies.
The noble advocate, to whom repair
Men of all classes, will be Berryèr—
And he, confiding in a higher power,
Escapes from sadness in each bitter hour.
Content, resign'd, still stedfast, firm, and bold,
Free, while a nation lets itself be sold,
From sadness, as from consciousness of wrong
Deliver'd thus, to truth it will belong
To yield that none are happier than he,
Although besieged by human misery.

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But there remains for man the tangled wood
Where world and gain alone are understood.
Through wretched wastes the thirsty soul will fly
Vainly some fancied treasure to descry.
What bliss in riches, banquets, sports, and halls,
Where body triumphs and the spirit falls?
Let pomp and thrift and prodigals reply,
Oh, wretched this! this sooth is misery!
Such is the sadness of the world so vain,
Though tongues are still the last that will complain;
The jaded eye, the dead or wither'd heart
Unconscious will betray the lurking smart,
When all outside assurance seems to wear,
While still within is nothing but despair;
Nothing but fretful passions raging still
Without a hope, a purpose, or a will,
If mind's inactive sadness will ensue,
And this the man of pleasure finds most true;
His body not inspirèd by the soul
Will sink to weariness past all control.
Whereas the soul can seldom wearied be,
Such vital force has its activity.
You thought you needed only the gross earth;
Your soul the while has felt a total dearth;
It needs to soar upon the wings of thought
To spheres where nothing without God is sought;
You held that passion gratified was all,
The French word *ennui* best depicts your fall.
Yet even here such bitter contrasts prove
The means to teach at times the way to love;

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That love which makes man with himself agree,
Where ceaseless motion must for ever be,
To win him back thus sordid and unbless'd
To where the flesh and spirit find their rest.
Then all this sadness vague and so perplex'd,
When hopeless seems the cure to conscience vex'd,
Will yield at length and wholly pass away,
And bright and cloudless leave each happy day.
Is this the man or woman once so dull,
Of every bosom grief each day so full;
Restless, complaining, vex'd at each slight chance;
Tired of the splendour, pleasure, even dance;
So tired of time, of life, of what can come,
Of present, past, in public or at home;
Dead to all sense of beauty in the sky,
In earth, or art, or in the human eye?
Yes; but the love of God now moulds the whole;
Their flesh exults and wingèd is the soul
To rise above the mists that weigh'd them down,
And shaped all forms to a perpetual frown.
Sprightly and gay they prove the great success
Of that first law which here I would express;
How without love—the love of God supreme—
Life is at best a wild and feverish dream;
Sad, purposeless, and altogether void
Of that which nature gave to be enjoy'd.
But now perhaps in grave philosophy
Some will pretend there lies a remedy
For all the sorrows that we have survey'd;
And so a great mistake they'll say we've made.

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Alas! in this so little is there true,
That here again fresh sadness comes in view.
In fact, to that of courts, of wars, of halls,
Must now be added (and the thought appals)
The sadness of philosophers profound,
Where talents, science, and deep views abound.
Philosophy, if true, can yield relief—
A cure of mind and heart for every grief.
But then the wisdom that men say they love
Is nothing but the God who reigns above.
I own I cannot relish much the phrase,
Invented thus to strike you with amaze.
Of what avail this pomp, with all this fuss,
Which never speaks like any one of us?
Besides, in point of fact, with all this fame
The mass of sages reap an empty name.
How oft do Germans all good sense defy,
Seeking the rest of men to mystify!
Some Frenchmen too with brains bewilder'd long,
Have their translators to conceal what's wrong,
To pass their nonsense beneath English sense,
And gain a *prestige* for what's mere pretence.
But this philosophy, so high in tone,
Presents a sadness fatal of its own.
Results of science (they avow as much),
Vague grief of mind and heart can never touch;
And science without faith in things of spirit,
Vague sadness for its name can only merit.
Nervous, dejected, such men grope their way,
With grief oppress'd and doubt the live-long day.

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And who can wonder, when their empty pride
Ends in conclusions others must deride,
As the vain jargon of a sophist's brain,
That of all winds the fury must sustain?
Whether you seek in England, Prussia, France,
Those whose grave names you eagerly advance,
When seeking from some changeful, haughty nod,
The peace and wisdom you could gain from God,
From human thoughts a lonely heart to sever,
May be task easy; to cure sadness never.
The mind must dwindle when its only food
Is empty phrases seldom understood,
Of which the sense (and this they oft avow)
Once known unto themselves, is hidden now.
"When this was writ the meaning was well known
To me and God, but now I freely own
God only knows its meaning, but now I
To find the sense can my own self defy."
So said the greatest of the German sages!
You'll find it thus on his "immortal pages;"
But how can gladsome cheerful thoughts arise,
From mists which can at best but cause surprise?
A sadden'd heart, a downcast cloudy mind,
Are the chief issues on this path you find.
Conscience thus wounded by the phrases high
Of those whose wisdom only brings a sigh,
Will sometimes to the love of God repair,
And find both truth and its contentment there.
And after all, what false and wasted breath,
To talk of difficulties clouding faith!

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On mysteries divine one loves to muse,
But those of nature you would never choose
To look into, or deep upon them ponder:
'Tis agony alone they cause, not wonder.
That for your food the harmless beast must perish
Is quite enough for feasts to spoil your relish.
Custom of course will still come off the winner,
But the great mystery of all's your dinner.
Would you then learn philosophy to free
From the sad weight of thoughtful misery?
Let Malebranche, Bossuet, or Schlegel stand
For proof, which every one can understand,
That not by nature's cold and flickering light
Sadness can yield to what's removed from sight,
But that by hearing what's reveal'd from high,
We can obtain its surest remedy.
Let then true sages show you, as they can,
The God so personal and join'd to man,
That in His love, so warm, the secret lies,
For adding bliss to what the wisest prize,
For joining constant exercise of thought
With all the gladness that was ever sought
By those who studied pleasure as their end,
And on its prevalence made good depend.
But now o'er scenes of life fresh shades descend,
As onward still th' appointed path you wend,
Which each year sadder and more lonely grows
As nature makes it drawing to its close.
Sadness of retrospects may be the van
Of these great changes incident to man.

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For mem'ry then becomes a kind of tomb,
Around which rests a deep and constant gloom,
Nourish'd by shadows of the pleasure past,
Of those too whom it grieves us to outlast.
Gone are the friends who were so kind and true;
There's no one left to stand or care for you.
Stop, hasty pilgrim through the dreary wood;
Your words will change when all is understood
As thoughts and facts require it to be,
In view to this stage of mortality.
True, your condition outwardly is sad,
Fit to bewilder, and to drive you mad,
If the sure remedy be still denied,
Which in the love of Heaven is supplied.
But when you think of God the past returns;
With hope and gratitude the bosom burns.
For all that once existed liveth still,
And live supremely happy ever will
In Him, unless some treason and some hate
Should thwart His plans, and self-induce a fate
Opposed to nature as it first began,
And still subversive of designs for man.
Then sadness to a taste for deathless things
Must yield when hearts and minds have gain'd those wings
Which soar above vicissitudes and change,
And through eternal ages find their range.
But then the solitude around you grown!
No one who truly love for you can own!

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Sole in the world however you may fare,
No heart to gladden or with grief to care!
O witless creature, wanting in the glow
Which man's high nature should itself bestow!
Friendless! alone! when ever at your side
Reason proclaims that as through systems wide
Stays the great common while still bosom-friend,
Who can to planets and to you attend!
"Bombast," you cry, mere fancy, a decoy,
But no true source of real human joy;
Nay, but a fact most positive and clear,
If only reason and your heart you hear.
True, the sublimity of such a thought
Seems to deny what is in practice sought,
When you complain of wanting a sweet friend,
And all you hear is, on your God depend.
But groundless is mistrusting of this view,
Which comes alone from thoughtlessness in you.
Man is himself sublime, mysterious too.
The thought that shuts this out cannot be true.
God, in things made, seems present to the eye,
And can indeed a true friend's place supply,
If only mind its government maintains,
And acts on sense which it in fact sustains.
Love creates love, and where has love been shown
If not in each thing that you think your own,
When God gave what you loved and so admired,
The feeling granted and the taste inspired?
In presence, then, of Him to whom you owe
All that you loved and in your mem'ry know,

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Of Him, the stripling's and the grown man's friend,
Of Him so loving, faithful to the end,
Who never will His creature frail forsake,
Who seeks that it of heaven too should partake;
Who, when it falls, still raises it anew,
When withers, yields it His reviving dew;
Who, to crown all, permits himself to be
Malign'd by grave men's gloomy calumny;
And all because He loves you to the last,
Intent to save, and to forgive the past—
In presence, thus, of Him who once for you
The pains of death, of bitter torment knew,
Left, like yourself, alone, unknown, despised;
Like you, perhaps, bereft of what is prized
Above all worlds, exemption from the pain
Which human guilt has caused you to sustain,
Can you be sad, or seek another food
To cheer and animate such solitude?
Each day we love our friends, though out of sight;
Then why distrust of God your thought so bright?
It comforts you to think of those you know;
Then let your sense of God be even so.
And, if His arms encircle you around,
Then youth and early ties and friends are found.
In presence such your sole remaining fear
Is lest your loved ones are too daily near
To see not evil in your nature sown
Which only God can cancel and disown.
For now a sense of sadness in the mind
Is where no good within yourself you find.

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Alas! what stagnant vapours settle there,
Nothing that's solid, little even fair:
Though far too sacred is such special ground,
A cure divine for this we know was found.
But love divine will lead us to admire
What may be sounded on my humble lyre.
For love suggests that somehow there may be
A thing that pleases God in you and me.
We trust that what is delicate is pure,
Of what's unselfish we can feel quite sure.
There are light graces which will often try
To please a stranger even passing by.
There is neglect of self and courage bold,
To practise virtues that can not be told,
A wish, a fancy, an interior act
Which with Omniscience may outweigh a fact;
There may be still within the lightest heart
A faint resemblance to an angel's part;
In short, when most we feel our inward wants,
There may be what descends from angels' haunts;
Interior feelings that proud men despise,
Our God who loves us may e'en deign to prize;
The love reciprocal that this must cause,
Dispels that grief the mind from musing draws.
We love the Being, loving what we feel,
And bright contentment o'er the mind will steal;
Far from creating confidence insane,
Of every good in man the blight and bane,
But just infusing secret, quiet joy,
The childlike fervour of a maid or boy,

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Who finds in love a solace for all woe
That mere self-hatred would induce to grow;
And so this love divine by slow degrees
To more good leads, while it from sadness frees
The tender, delicate, unknown desire
Virtues more solid may in time inspire:
Believing them agreeable to Him,
Sadness first yields to what was deem'd a whim.
And thus the love of God will ever be
A balm, a joy, a glorious mystery.

But now of things less subtle I must sing,
And show how love of God can heal each sting.
So then in scenery you took delight,
In change of seasons, spring and summer bright,
Autumn and winter. Now you know not why
The charms have faded for your ear and eye.
Nothing is quite like what it was of yore,
When each new day transported you the more.
Ah! well, the mystery is soon explain'd;
It is, you know, that we were not ordain'd
To dwell for ever with the things that fade.
For brighter, higher pleasures we were made.
So when this weariness of earth and sky
Begins to make you taste new misery,
The cure is still the same, 'tis love divine
That makes the face of nature ever shine.
Flowers and trees, plains, brooks, and mountains high,
With all the beauty that they can supply,

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Will gain fresh charms when they are all survey'd
As by Him whom you love, intended, made
To yield enjoyment for the little span
That here on earth is granted unto man.
Again vague sadness flies, and all is seen
Ennobled when consider'd as a mean
To raise the heart oppress'd with want and thirst
To fields where all is lovely as at first,
Though endless ages roll for ever by,
And all things share in immortality.

But there is yet a sadness in this stage
Of life 'gainst which we still should battle wage.
Historic lore and letters 'gin to weary,
Sublime perchance, but both alike seem dreary
To those whose minds are permanently tired
Of what in youth was fresh and much admired.
Let both be studied long as men endure,
But for yourself, in honest truth you're sure,
Of both you've read and heard by far too much
To be amused by any moving touch
Of authors, who perhaps, if truth were known,
Would now be glad their writings to disown.
The trade must live, and boys be kept to books;
But for your part it is not with such hooks
You feel that hearts when wearied like your own
Can be uplifted when they're prostrate grown.
Of what avail to know the deeds and date
Of men and things long past beyond debate?
What skills it, over curious to review
Accomplish'd facts which, whether old or new,

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Can never change the course of human things,
Or heal the sadness which such study brings?
In letters, too, the mind at last discovers,
To view the whole with other eyes than lovers'.
Excess, bad taste, and faults of every kind
Are thought to justify a tired mind.
So sadness and disgust at length ensue,
And what is best appears no longer true.
But if the love of God inflame the breast,
How far removed from all fastidious rest
Becomes the scholar, aged and skill'd to pry
Into the past with ceaseless scrutiny!
Each page of history some good supplies
For thought that's fruitful and that never dies;
The truth or error, beauty or defect,
Seem all combined to yield a great effect
In proving what is told us from above,
That nought is worth but charity or love.
Still letters take, of centuries the boast,
Whether the bright or sad attract you most;
What are these volumes to an agèd eye,
Written in times that are so long gone by,
Of which, perhaps, the first edition sold,
Was out of print ere it was three days old?—
What, but pale monuments of other days,
That sadden him who thoughtfully surveys
Even the beauties of the spirit great,
Which strike, or kindle, or quite captivate?
Which proves how bootless and how vain to try
By talents, eloquence, or genius high,

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To realize a true and lasting good
When fame alone is by it understood.
What gain to authors, all this grace and wit—
Sweetness of Burke, the force of Fox or Pitt,
Richardson, Fielding!—let's not sing of these,
But take the recent authors that most please—
Byron and Wordsworth, Scott once dear to all—
How quickly fading does their mem'ry fall!
Fortune of books! I hear a critic cry[3],
Versatile taste, decreed so soon to die!
When I re-read the pages, wither'd now,
Of authors with "immortal" on their brow,
Inscribed by those who deem'd them such great things,—
Basnage, Leclerc, of literature kings,
Sorbrière, Bouhier, and the sceptic Bayle,—
I'm sad to think how little must avail
The labours long of those who now are dead,
When of each author all that can be said
Is that no longer it is worth men's while,
Unless mere curious leisure to beguile,
To take him from the shelf on which he lies,
As in the common pit for all that dies,
Lost, undistinguish'd, by worms eaten, rotten,
Buried in libraries where all's forgotten.
Spirits of books, just as their bodies, must
Of many authors soon return to dust.
So it will prove for you with all the noise,
For countless volumes that the trade employs,

[3] Sainte-Beuve.

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Sought from their birth with such an eager rage
That crowds press in to catch the boasted page.
A day will come, much sooner than you think,
For all now passes quickly as a wink,
When the great current over which you glide,
Of interest, will be on another side.
Your books, like vessels wreck'd and cast away,
Will be left dry, and never find the way
To pass again upon the billows high
Of tides ne'er refluent, howe'er you sigh.
Letters present each day abandon'd shores
Which youth will scorn, while thoughtful age deplores.
Who will survive? who will one day be read?
Who prove immortal 'midst these hosts of dead?
Funereal honours, praise a day or two,
Such is the fate reserved for me and you!
And even when the fame is wide and long,
Of what avail these eulogies for song?
Letters in brief have thus a solemn voice
Which says lament now rather than rejoice.
Sévigné, Sterne, sweet Gay, and countless more,
The pride of nations in the days of yore,
The gentle, gracious, learned, and the gay
Have to grave readers only this to say:
"We wrote, we sung, on earth we left a name,
But who can tell if here extends the fame
So won, so valued, but for us so short,
When call'd away with spirits to consort?"
Well, for this sadness, still so deep, though calm,
There is but one, and that a sovereign balm.

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To God the past as present is in view;
Through love you live in God? 'tis so with you.
While loving God you think no more of death;
That love revives all those who once drew breath;
You view them living, only gladden'd more
By verse and prose, of which the former store
May have wing'd souls to join them there above
Where Shakspeare's genius bears the name of love.

But now methinks by some 'twill be replied,
All this seems clear, and cannot be denied;
Only of what avail this sage device,
If men can't always follow the advice?
And surely it must plainly be confess'd
That the so vaunted cure, howe'er express'd,
Lies far beyond the ken or reach of most
Who can't love God whatever you may boast.
Cannot! And why? This leads us to the end;
I shall be brief; an ear attentive lend.
Yes, we confess that what you say is true;
There are who never can enjoy this view;
But the cause clearly we can now descry,
And to mistake it all men we defy.
This cause exists not in the ancient school,
Wisdom its light and charity its rule;
But there are men most grave, and stern and cold,
Who utter truths, and yet not as of old;
For much is alter'd, passing through their brain,
Which leaves on truth itself a certain stain.

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Take but an instance recent of their way:
That Shakspeare could love God you must not say.
He a true Christian! He a believer still!
This to suggest is to offend their will:
For God, they think, is ever quite beyond
The hearts of all of whom you can be fond.
In fact, they think it shocking to the good
If His great name should e'er be understood
As having been adored by such a man,
Let Rio try to argue if he can.
With them, great genius, love, and words most clear
Can only for him justify their fear;
Though fear is not the word they should have used;
'Tis rather hate, through thought of God abused,
Which makes them only a mere outcast see
In one so dear to all humanity.
Of natures dull that only can inflame,
Where they can spy some vice or spot of shame,
Timid, distrustful of whate'er is bright,
Like him in tales yclept of gloomy sight,
Impatient, passionless, unless they see
Some prospect of man's future misery,
With thoughts that savour of some hidden ire,
Seeking contentment in a penal fire,
All first-rate men, 'tis said, to give "retreats"
Where hideous terror each one only meets,
By faith unsanction'd, point-blank 'gainst the letter,
'Gainst all the thoughts of love that make men better,

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Pitiless, reckless, heedless of all bond
But that to which their own gloom will respond,
Their object possibly to scare some child,
And with fanaticism cruel, wild,
To make it scorn each dearest human tie,
And mother, father, sister, all defy,
While still of old forms subject to the nod,
Not openly to change th' incarnate God,
Whom parents, children, and the people bless,
Though strangely masking what they still profess,
These dark, sad prophets seek with all their might
To keep God's goodness out of human sight.
Severity that's infinite, they say,
Will come to try us at the judgment-day;
Inventing thus a language of their own
To sweep the corn down, with the cockle sown.
I own they terrify, discourage me;
At times I fancy truth it all must be.
Yet, is it sin to think that God is good,
When mercy infinite is understood?
Can it be wrong to dwell on attributes
Reveal'd, and such as reason ne'er disputes?
They sometimes dwell upon a single letter,
The more detach'd, so much then the better;
And with that fragment armèd they defy
All who their dreadful principles deny.
Oh, shame! oh, horror! oh, the fatal end,
Such lore, such force, such eloquence to spend!
As if in hurricanes which swept the sky
Had been the Godhead when they had pass'd by!

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As if they never heard the still faint voice
Which bids men hope, be grateful, and rejoice,
Beneath that standard, lifted up on high,
Causing low frailty itself to die
With love ecstatic, solely still intent
On that great love through which the blood was spent,
That saves alike the wretched and the just,
In which alike they both must solely trust!
When thoughts of God are thus insanely changed
By men whose feet through dreary wastes have ranged,
Without a gleam, whichever way they turn,
To show us love and cause the heart to burn,
We grant the cure for sadness is denied,
Unless consisting in their gloomy pride;
And then it must prove worse than the disease,
Boast as they may, or say whate'er they please.
But this is human madness to invoke,
Men to subdue, to injure and provoke.
'Tis said, when speaking to the poor and bad,
The style of teaching must be rough and sad.
But human hearts are delicate and fine,
The vulgar have the same as yours and mine;
And what to us seems strain'd and too severe,
Will hardly teach the lowest to revere.
I think you err, despising thus the low,
You may amuse, but not convert them so.
For pamper'd rich men keep your words of flame,
'Tis they who can't be moved by love or shame.

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But outcasts and the lowly in their sin,
By love, unless mere drunkards, you can win.
Of course some fear is needful for us all,
But not what solely, simply must appal.
Moreover too, these gloomy views are rare,
And few can owe to them their own despair;
But when such looks and rhapsodies will lour,
The best resource is to take up some flower,
And trace in form and colours that great Mind
Which is almighty and yet still all-kind.
'Tis useless answering your grave men's wit;
Better upon some cowslip-bank to sit,
And read De Sales, or others of that type,
Who the pure mirror of your mind can wipe
From the dark stains that sterner men have left,
Themselves from teaching love amerced, bereft;
Or hear but poets when they sing as men,
And mark their deepest thoughts expounded then.
That God is good, how do you surely know?
By marking what on you He did bestow.
As made by Him, if goodness dwells in you,
Goodness must be within the Maker's view,
Unless you say that it you did invent,
And then to Bedlam you may soon be sent.
Love goodness nature must and ever will,
The proof demonstrative is ever still,
That He too loves, is, what He would impart,
To human creatures when He made their heart.
But catch another tone from poet's lyre,
Which can in you the love of God inspire.

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For having made you why be grateful still
To God who only used his sovereign will?
Nay; but a thought it cost Him. Then adore,
Gratitude with love demands no more.
He thought of you. Is that no little debt
To make you what is infinite forget?
No; feel all the greatness of the mighty love,
And glow like Seraphs in their choirs above.
Our faith knows more; but here I only sing
Of what you reach with merely nature's wing.
So that this love divine can never be
Beyond the reach of human misery.
Cease let the song; our end accomplish'd here,—
A noble end, though weakly served, I fear.
To trace our human sadness to its cause,
On each distinct division briefly pause,
To show at all times when we breathe the sigh
A sure and potent remedy is nigh,
In strict conformity with nature's plan,
Sublime, angelic, yet befitting man,
Common to all while singular for each,
Mysterious attributes to guide and teach,
Admitting that at first we ought to fear
The great Creator, to whom all hearts are dear,
But showing that by love, and love alone,
Our nature gains its true congenial tone,
Escapes the sadness that obscures the light,
Induces visions ever fair and bright—

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This to achieve while moderate and true
Was the sweet flight imposed on us for you.
The wing was feeble, but the purpose high;
While rising thus—'twere happiness to die!

THE MARRIAGE AT CANA IN GALILEE.

(IMITATED FROM A POEM BY C. MACKAY, AND A SERMON BY THE REV. HUBERT DE BURG, HEARD IN THE BAVARIAN CHAPEL.)

THERE'S a mother, a true one, what can be sweeter?
Mysteriously granted though not within view,
Than one that's mere earthly to save us far meeter,
For tenderness just such as once we all knew.
Natural, cheerful,
Loving, enduring,
Unskill'd to refuse the least boon that we ask,
Remaining, sustaining,
Imploring, prevailing,
To serve us her pleasure, her self-imposed task.
There's a mother, a dear one blessed for ever,
To care for us here in this world of woe;
Watching us softly with ceaseless endeavour
That God might upon us His favour bestow,
Like a flower, like a tower,
Christ's mother, our mother,

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Mother of all who adore her great Son;
Most clement, most potent,
Most faithful, most skilful
To keep us in safety till heaven be won.
That mother, her nature we do not invent;
Like her office reveal'd, it all has been told,
And we know that to pray for us she's ever bent;
We gather it too from her conduct of old,
Complying, entreating,
Tenderly, motherly,
Interceding for all who needed some aid;
Amiable, wonderful,
Diffident, confident,
And sure to obtain, when for aught she has pray'd.
In Cana the banquet of marriage is spread;
These friends—they are humble, and nameless, and poor.
But who that has once that sweet, simple tale read,
Will not love the kind, homely, unknown, and obscure?
So hearty, so jolly,
Respectful and grateful,
Intent to give pleasure, and comfort, and ease,
Anxiously, nervously,
Toiling so, smiling so,
To serve, and to help, and to cherish, and please.
Our mother, invited alone with her Son,
(St. Joseph her spouse was no longer in life,)
Soon perceived, like a woman, ere feasting was done
She must pity that soft and pretty young wife.

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How perplexing, the wine failing,
There's no more, at the door,
After all the long labour, watching, and care,
One so bashful too!
So soon put out too!
A disgrace most untoward, unheard-of, so rare!
Mary, our mother, never proud like the wise,
Who still o'er all human wants boast they can soar,
Her tenderness small things will never despise,
Or those who this incident needs must deplore.
Sensible, powerful,
Considerate, delicate,
Still feeling for dear ones of whom they were guests,
Quietly, secretly,
Beckoning, whispering,
An act of true kindness and love she suggests.
Eternally chosen not yet come the hour
To the world by Himself His Godhead to show,
But His goodness she knows is great as His power;
On servants alone she would counsel bestow.
Amazing, surpassing!
Scarce credible, though visible!
The will of Omnipotence yields to her eyes;
For, stating merely, hinting merely,
With looks only, smiles only,
The great fiat is utter'd yielding heaven surprise.
Can be bent then, and changed then, each day and hour,
The will that's eternal, the Godhead's decree;
Since Mary had once too this questionless power,
The same she can still do for you and for me.

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Hastening, delaying,
Achieving, preventing,
The things that we long for, or anxiously fear,
Maternal, supernal,
Pleading, beseeching,
Indulgent and gracious she ever is near.
If unask'd she obtain'd then, thus premature,
A clear self-showing forth for the world to view,
The first, too, for that by the Magi though sure,
And that by the Father, to others were due,
What think you? what say you?
What great things, what small things,
Will she not gain, when we pray and aspire,
Considering, remembering,
At her feet singing sweet,
With all the devotion that love can inspire?
For think you that since she's removed from our eyes
Her power has yielded to time and to death?
That crown'd with a glory that darkens the skies,
She feels no more pity for those who draw breath?
Forgetful, neglectful,
Not seeing, not heeding,
The wants of poor mortals adoring her Son?
One like us, only thus,
Past away, till the day
That judgment pronounces and heaven is won?
Oh, man! misbelieving though Christian in name,
Be not a mere heathen philosopher proud,
With thoughts of the Deity still now the same
As sages who boasted of wisdom so loud.

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Thou seest, thou believest,
Thou feelest, thou teachest,
A vague recognition (and praise it we can)
Of somewhat, you know not,
Above us, about us,
But not the faith yielding redemption for man.
The Christ and our Mary in thought we can't sever
So long as we follow our reason for guide;
Believe Him God while still man too—this is what never
You can do with logic while she is denied,
As availing, prevailing,
His mother, our mother,
To help us on this wild tempestuous shore.
Oh! yield then, confess then,
Both grateful and faithful,
That she is a mother for us evermore.
Oh, woman! that name still the fondest and best
That from our poor mortal lips ever can fall,
If of mankind we love and cherish the rest,
'Tis to thee we owe brotherhood, friendship, all.
"For His mother, there's no other
Lying prone, quite alone.
Let me kiss Him," a woman exclaims in song;
We too serve them, we too love them;
We would shroud them, we would kiss them,
For sake of their mother, to whom they belong.

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There's a mother, and one, to whom we've seen kneel
The mother, the wife, and the daughter so pure.
They are gone, fled from us, but now how we feel,
That their faith was divine and their confidence sure,
While simply and truly,
Imploring and trusting
Still her whom each loved as so long known and best,
Like a child, ever mild,
The fondest, the sweetest,—
Before whom they kneel now in glory and rest!

IRELAND.

"Now Eastward, ho!" a poet cried of yore,
But "Stepping westward" pleased our Wordsworth more.
The sun descending through a gorgeous sky
Will soothe the heart and fascinate the eye.
Emblem of man, sinking to rise again,
While watching it we seem to hear a strain
Plaintive yet hopeful, hearts from time to sever,
Harmonious echoes, rolling on for ever.
Thoughts, too, are waken'd by that glorious light;
We think of friends, of countries out of sight;
We seek to join them both in one sweet song
Which can that pensive transport yet prolong

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While memory unfolds her fondest scroll,
Recalling each thing that makes up the whole.

Holy and tender, fairest of the fair,
Westward I look'd and knew that it was there
Thy sportive childhood play'd and first drew breath,
Elsewhere to grow and triumph over death.
Oh, Jane! so fervent, stedfast in thy creed,
As if of nothing else thou hadst a need!
And yet, so beauteous, bright, like any flower,
As if thy office was to deck a bower!
Who can recall and Erin's isle not see,
A chosen spot to bring forth saints like thee?
Island of saints! far through that western sky
The heart when wounded oft to thee will fly!
For thou dost thus uphold thy ancient fame,
And the great privilege of faith proclaim.
Thus, what all love, thy image can convey
A vision gracious in a human way—
Vision, as here, of faith not left alone,
Abstract, pedantic, void of the warm tone
Which charity imparts to persons real,
Living on earth as if they were ideal;
So that, at once, in thee we have in mind
Truth, and the fairest, best of human kind.
But mark each point, and think of Erin's train
Of light with which she Fancy can sustain.
And first when in historic page you cast
A thoughtful look on ages long since past,

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You trace, as on walls made by Flandrin, story,
Processions long of saints and pontiffs hoary,
Of virgins bright, the theme of holy song,
Which even can to chivalry belong;
Schools to which flock'd the youth of every clime;
Retreats of peace amidst the wars and crime
That render'd Europe in those middle days
A chequer'd scene to grieve him who surveys
The whole, so dark while spotted thick as there
With light, of which much later it was bare.
And mark, when here ferocious acts abound,
No odious tastes permitted have been found;
No bull-fights, cock-fights, as in grander Spain,
Which leave still on her annals such a stain.
Here crime was lawless, branded, and confess'd,
Never in garb of local custom dress'd.
Read the Four Masters—there are blood and fire,
But no foul-sanction'd sports to raise your ire.
The evil and the good distinguish'd, known;
No compromise that conscience will disown.
Then when the storm of angry error broke,
Let loose by those who lived without a yoke,
We see a country bleeding, stript, defied,
Yet boasting that its children lived and died
True to religion, faith's sworn chivalry,
Arm'd with what Heaven calls its panoply.
A little later, and the milder sway
Of times less cruel then prepared the way
For once more seeing Church and Cross arise,
To fill the foes of both with sad surprise,

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Presenting, when the age is moulded so,
A curious fact observed in high and low—
To faith submitting best of mortal kind,
Rejecting it—less pleasing to the mind
Than those in nations whom they vainly ape,
Appearing then in questionable shape,—
I mean a puzzle to the very men
Whose foolish honours are their object then;
While her collective spirit is the same
As that which first had merited her name;
Injure herself,—yet if you take the part
Of those who stand for faith, you win her heart.
But now behold her struggling to arise,
And risen too in some sense to our eyes.
Once more grave pontiffs now her altars throng;
The new-raised temple hears the solemn song.
But all ignored, is, scarcely even seen
By those who to oppose her faith still mean.
Men that to Paul and John you can compare
Pass quite unnoticed, unrewarded there,
Not by the people whom they teach and feed,
But by the race which heresy can breed.
Oh, word transparent, showing thus a spot
Not found on all who Catholic are not!
So while the world hears of pedantic fame,
Alone within the flock survives their name,
Admired, respected, handed down with love,
And on immortal scrolls enroll'd above.
Now other vistas through the clouds I see,
Showing how poor and common men can be

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Humble and kind, affectionate and brave,
Intent in secret their own souls to save.
You tell of crime, of outrages to law;
Portraits of wild and savage men you draw.
But while the cause you studiously conceal,
There are far other pictures that reveal
A race of men despised, insulted, view'd
As if in days of slavery renew'd,
And yet resign'd, and patient, faithful still,
Meekly to bear whate'er their Maker's will
Permits at times for reasons that defy
The clear discernment of mere nature's eye.
Of nations what a mystery is fate,
While facts, as here, are plain beyond debate!
Why should an ancient race be doom'd by force
To have a new-made creed, of doubts the source?
Reject they will what would malign the old;
All that occurs might then have been foretold.
For laws unjust and view'd with stern despite,
Will have results to baffle strongest might.
E'en now a few indignant at their fate
Madly give scope to treachery and hate,
To folly too, for what is more insane,
Than of past crimes thus bootless to complain?
To nourish thoughts that Rome would have denied
When Livy, Tully were her honest pride—
Who never wish'd that Padua's fair name,
Arpinum's either should engross their fame.
As if it were not grandeur to belong
To the vast empire that will live in song

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When Celtic fires fade and pass away,
Before the radiance of the Christian sway!
Which leaves all races free to love their shore,
If, their own loving, they love union more.
But while such symptoms of a narrow soul
Appear in few contrasted with the whole,
The vast majority contented bear
The ills which poor men have to suffer there.
Sprightly and gay, while grateful from the heart
For the least kindness richer men impart,
We see these patients practising a grace
That would adorn the gentlest of our race;
Quick to appreciate virtues of the soul,
Revering those who passions must control,
The first to honour virtue in the great,
The last to murmur or excite debate;
Ready for action, science, art, as any,—
In things of "progress" still surpassing many;
Content with what false science so disdains,
Submissive to the laws that God ordains.
Island of saints, still constant, still allied
To the great truths opposed to human pride;
Island of ruins, towers, cloisters grey,
Whence palmer kings with pontiffs once did stray
To Rome and Sion, or to kindle fire
Which amidst later darkness can inspire
Lands that in fondest memory and song
Thy pristine glory fearlessly prolong—
Thy peaceful image floating in the west
Denotes a cause to yield all spirits rest;

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Ancient, yet never past as years gone by,
But rising gloriously in eastern sky,
As oft as finding in the setting light
A symbol of thy grandeur in that night
Of ages, when thy fame from sea to sea
Extended as a blissful mystery.
For, grandeur, nations, kingdoms, have their day,
But Faith like thine will never pass away.

LOVE AFTER DEATH.

"Love after death," the Spanish poet sung.
Who can its depth from silent thinking sever?
From hearts may sighs, from eyes may tears be wrung,
But tell what 'tis in words—ah me! no, never.
Can words describe the faint, quick-passing shade
Which darkens all that fancy loves to paint?
Can they pourtray what nature has been made
When brightest thoughts must have that nameless taint?
A spot may bring back incidents of old,
The mental eye may see each trivial thing
That caused a love which never could be told—
But the strange want itself you cannot sing.
The horse, the boat, the gate, the path, the stile,
May for an instant conjure up the dead,
Your memory fresh, but serving to beguile
With what can never be with music said.

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But no fond traces of a happy day,
  Left in the secret chamber of your heart,
Can chase the mystic spirit that will stay,
  And never more from that recess depart.
That moves below whatever mind can scan,
  Profoundly dwelling silent and alone,
The grief, the madness, yet the joy of man,
  When in his deep, mysterious bosom grown.
It is not that the past is all for him,
  Or that he seeks to tell the reason why
His whole remaining tastes are but a whim,
  'Tis that no more is left, except to die.

TOO LATE.

THERE'S nothing that I so much hate
As once to be for aught too late.
The very thought long time before
Impels me to sit near the door.
And surely here is nothing strange!
Just let your eye a moment range,
And see the trouble and dismay
When you are late on any day.
These railway stations—only think!
Here's no train waits for you to wink.
And then the running helter skelter!
Like hunted rats that find no shelter.

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Much better to be ready there,
However foolish folk may stare
To see you waiting such a while,
As if you would your life beguile.
Well, let them stare and idly prate;
To be too late I deadly hate.
Ah, then! I hope this boyish taste
No silly limits will e'er waste.
'Tis little to be late for trains;
But to be late for what sustains
The summon'd spirit call'd away,
Upon our last and final day—
Oh! that indeed were folly quite,
With all gone wrong and nothing right.

THE CLUB.

With pitchforks drive out nature if you will;
Back through some cranny you will find her still.
The process on myself had been applied,
Till it was thought that duly had been dyed
My mind with what the progress of our age
In knowledge true requireth at each stage
Of human life when civilized indeed,
Without the burden of a social creed.
To seek old friends is now a foolish act,
Deem'd silly, out of date, and that's a fact.

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However, after all my pains, I found
My heart to a late comrade still was bound.
So I resolved, quite warm with youthful glee,
To pop in at the Square just him to see.
But "not at home" I heard, ah! there's the rub,
Forsooth he was departed to his club.
There you can find him, said the porter tall,
Waving me outwards from the lofty hall.
Well; it was but a step, so that was nice,
A true palazzo saw me in a trice;
The outside fair, with marble columns long,
While what lay inwards wonder would prolong.
My ancient friend invited me within
(For in November London's rather thin),
So we could visit sanctuaries vast
Where nothing savour'd greatly of the past,
Though you saw book-rooms, others where they smoke,
And all so gorgeous that it might provoke
Anew the Persian, who seems there outdone,
In what of Epicures the favour won;
Such carpets, brasses, lights, above all, chairs,
That with pure wonder you might see the hairs
Of some erect, as satisfied they gaze
On all that fills the vulgar with amaze.
To chairs I must return. Sooth each might be
A fortress for your children's chivalry,
A bed, a house, a very tower of strength,
Where, if your dandy could not stretch at length,

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He finds himself encased, so soft and well,
That I believe no tongue could ever tell
All the true comfort floating through his skin,
Or all the dreamings that are of its kin.
For, type complete of what convention loves,
Of what the world especially approves,
The adept worthy here of most respect,
Is one whom sentiment can ne'er affect.
Experienced in position rich and grand,
Assurance constant fully to command,
Without much brain, tho' speaking loud with "aws,"
With jest which smiles from others never draws,
With some slight tincture of what chemists know,
With knowledge scanty, all but mere so-so;
Law, politics, and things statistical,
Geology, and science physical,
Liberal, classical, and philanthropist,
Uncommon sharp, and rank materialist,
Of members best; his father's own best son,
Unbearable to me—his portrait's done,
Not by myself; the task would me appal,
'Tis Charles Nodier has painted all.
Other things peerless lay on every side,
But this great theme for me is far too wide.
Brief, I saw all, though you I need not tire,
And at each sight 'twas thought I must admire:
Though while at first unable to say why,
Nothing quite pleased or satisfied my eye;
Sadden'd I felt and somehow quite downcast
For days together after it was past.

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But now that I review the whole in mind,
The cause of this effect I clearly find.
And what that is I shall proceed to show:
Pray your attention deep and kind bestow.
Now foremost then, the wish to be complete,
Is an idea that I believe can meet
With little favour where there dwells a soul
That feels the want which nothing can control,
Of something nobler than is ever view'd,
Where men pretend that faults are all eschew'd.
To mend your club you thought 'twas not in fate,
And that's the thought precisely which I hate.
No wants acknowledged here, perhaps no heart
That any feels, or could to tongues impart
The humble words of artists in their flight,
Aspiring still to what is out of sight,
When to each work in the imperfect tense
They add their names, as conquer'd by the sense
Of man's unequal power, impotent
To give expression to their high intent.
You are complete, your task is finish'd all,
Let others rest here—me you but appal.
But there is something more than this abides;
The stranger tells you all, he nothing hides.
See what provision here has still been made
To ward off all that "comfort" would invade.
Though admirable many think it may,
Yet miserable is what others say.
Matter enthroned I own that here you find,
But where's the symbol that can speak to mind?

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How can the visions of a lofty soul
Find entrance through this vaunted costly whole?
Where each part indicates the latent thought
That beyond matter nothing should be sought.
Avaunt your comforts, all for ease and pride,
As if the lot of nature were defied;
I look on all sides, tracing if I can
The sure effects of genius in a man,
Who, with a spirit lofty and inspired,
Will scoff at objects by the fool admired,—
The body left with only what it needs,
The mind provided with what fancy feeds,
Proof that 'tis spirit which still dwells supreme
As deeming things material but a dream;
I look in vain; on tables all I see
Is but light trash from railway library,
Supplied by men, word-merchants of old
Quintilian call'd them, spreading to be sold
Their goods, as butchers hang up all their meat,
Display'd in markets open to the street.
Grave books on shelves we see as in their nest,
But not an arm is raised to break their rest.
For wealth prodigious sometimes will pretend
That even sages can find nought to mend
In its own temple raised up thus on high
Both heaven and earth to outrage and defy.
But what you see is only empty show;
A moment's glance will prove it to be so;
In short, pretence, and I fear little more
Than to deceive the strangers at the door,

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Whom, when like me they're let to have a peep,
Instinct soon tells that souls are here asleep.
So when in silence humbly they withdraw,
A sickly dream is what they think they saw.
Oh! what a contrast then the cheerful home
Where women sprightly, soul-inspirèd, roam;
Where mind and heart and fancy ever free
Find truth in fairy tales, that you and me
Inflame with truth's own precious, noble fire,
Such as can Nodier's charming page inspire.
Statistics, blue-books, Parliament reports
Here find no entrance to the happy ports
Of genius, love, and hearts supremely blest,
Where joys find joys, or wounded spirits rest.
Let selfish men enjoy their boasted state,
Let "comfort," "ease," preside at their debate,
Let clubs still reign, and enemies defy;
Fools to dislike them are both you and I;
Let lists of candidates be up for years,
Before a chance for any one appears.
But give me votes, and let me constant wait
Where dwells no pomp from artificial state.
Be mine resources from a happy breast,
Where I can loiter, read, and write, and rest.
Give me for "circle" in some lowly street,
The humble room where those I love I meet.
Yes, give me broken chairs, the modest fire,
The fair and good—'tis all that I admire.

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THE DESPONDENT CURED.

A CERTAIN stranger whom we need not name,
Though, if we did so, quite unknown to fame,
Finding himself desponding, rather low,
To use the common term, which you well know,
In fact almost bewilder'd at the thought
That each day only new afflictions brought,
That no more friends on earth were left to him,
That life's once sparkling cup was to the brim
Now fill'd with sorrows, vague and ceaseless fear,
Even when cause distinct did not appear,
So felt his nature bent beneath the grief
That any change would prove for him relief.
Having no hermit in the woods to meet,
From whom, as in old times, some counsel sweet
Could be obtain'd to calm his anxious breast,
And yield to troubled spirits some brief rest,
He thought he'd commune with himself one day—
And suddenly it seem'd as if a ray
Of former brightness shone—and reach'd his heart,
To life to reconcile him, and impart
A tone serener to his wounded sprite
Chasing the anger which, as sole delight,
He had been cherishing too long of late.
To criticize at least, if not to hate,

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All who in some relation with him stood,
All that occurr'd though little understood,
Had been the task with which he did employ
His too great leisure—judge how far from joy
Must this unhappy wight have been the while
With such dull thoughts his sadness to beguile!
What was the change which now came o'er his mind?
He sought to judge himself, and there to find
The cause of all the trouble which perplex'd
His sense, and which his heart and nature vex'd.
For first, if friends seem'd careless, almost cold,
Was it their fault if, form'd of such a mould,
They were unskill'd, it look'd, ofttimes to show
The love that others could more plain bestow?
What, if compared with some whom once he knew,
Their nature harsh appear'd, and not quite true
To that ideal charming, bright, and fair,
Was there not still some virtue to compare
To the sweet graces that he loved so well,
If only all their thoughts and acts they tell?
But so it is with some; they'd rather die,
Than that their goodness you should e'er descry.
And yet, in truth, their actions often speak
More than professions, which seem somewhat weak.
'Tis he who will not see that they are kind,
Because engross'd with others is his mind,
'Tis he who errs in thinking all should be
The same as others—uniformity.

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Besides, the dead are gone and pass'd away;
The type you've seen, the cast will never stay.
Those left have faults, but even in them still
Abide all the germs of an honest will.
That want of sympathy and sweet consent
Of minds, expressing more than language meant,
Which, uncongenial, coarse, and dull appear'd—
Ah! if the whole were seen, it might be fear'd
In his own critical suspicious turn
Lay the true cause that made his nature burn
With secret fire as if he's always wrong'd,
And that the fault to others still belong'd.
Why did he look with jealous prying eyes,
All that he heard and witness'd to despise?
What were these faults which he so loved to scan
But common failings incident to man?
Had others nothing to observe in him?
No crossness, melancholy dull, or whim,
Which might account for their displeasing tone,
When to himself he made his bitter moan?
Then why, like Alceste, must he now detest
Those who in him cannot find all their rest,
Cannot, at twenty, find a desert bliss,
Though from their side they were not him to miss?
While you are nervous, seeking Poet's light,
'Tis your poor warling that is in the right.
If even boys seem'd glad to be away,
No longer ever with himself to stay,
Was that a fault surprising at their age,
To make him mope, or pine with secret rage?

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So in a moment all seem'd well again,
Leaving him cheer'd, unable to complain,
The boy affectionate, the new friend fond,
As when he had not learnèd to despond.
Love and the sunshine of a happy hour
Reign'd as in early days to cheer his bower.
Once more successful, gaining what he sought,
All from ascribing to himself the fault,
Kind all that know him, gracious seems their tone,
Merely from finding faults had been his own.
But fortune, as of old the Pagans said,
Had caused him grief, still filling him with dread
Of future evils, losses, want of means
To meet the list of grief that intervenes
Between bright days of youth and manhood's power,
And the declining years when clouds will lour,
Letting loose storms to strip the aged tree,
An emblem of man's instability.
Well here again the cause of his displeasure
Was his own love of this life without measure.
The fault was not in things that touch'd his pride,
But in the selfish love with which were dyed
His erring thoughts, so anxiously diffused,
To reap at once what here has been refused
By Heaven's own goodness, wishing to impart
A bliss more worthy of the human heart
Than ever could be found in this poor vale,
Where tears must flow, and richest blessings fail.
The culprit here again stood self-confess'd,
And thus once more his spirit found its rest.

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Oh, happy moment, truly wondrous cure,
That might through endless ages still endure,
The fault acknowledged, felt to be his own,
No blame on circumstance, or others thrown,
And the result a calm contented soul,
Pleased with each part and ravish'd with the whole!

POESY VERSUS PROSE.

Cold was the gloom upon the way,
No object pleased the sight
Of one who still had long to stray,
A lonely sadden'd wight.
The air itself that used to cheer,
Though darkness came apace,
Shed now no beauty far or near
That he could view or trace;
The river, dale, or ruin old
That once had such a charm,
Had now no legend to be told;
All seem'd to chill or harm;
His fancy torpid, dead his heart,
No hopes, no fancy bright
That could a distant streak impart
To that dim, inward night.
Onward without a thought he sped,
For even thoughts had ceased;

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As if within him all were dead,
Never to be released
From the dull, sullen, helpless mood
In which he found his soul,
With bitterness for only food
So long as life should roll.
When hark! he hears a sweet, faint sound
And spies a lonely lad,
Who, stretch'd upon a castle mound
Beneath its ruins sad,
Supplied an object to the eye
While, like a youngster bent,
Regardless of the tower high,
To play his instrument,
Thinking of nothing but his tone,
Playing with all his heart,
But playing for himself alone,
As if a child of art,
Emitting music sweet as love
On summer's eve so fair,
Seeming to float through clouds above
So bright with radiance there.
What sudden change! How can it be?
Magicians with their lore?
The dull despairing wretch—yes, he
Can now through splendours soar.
This flute with gentle liquid tone
Was all the magic used;
And lo! that gloom so pathless grown,
Through heart and mind diffused,

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Pass'd like a morning vapour low,
That hid a glorious view,
Leaving instead a sunny glow
With all things bright anew.
"Player of flute let me be named,"
Said one of Homer's men,
"When you would have me pleased and famed,"
Such was a Poet then.
Yet Poets, great proprietors,
Have treasures vast and old,
Which dread no hardy rioters,
In times of trouble bold.
Their mines are in the running stream,
The meadows yield them rents;
Their patrimony is a dream,
The willows are their tents.
They're lords of rays and perfumes rare,
All colours are their own;
They can command the earth and air,
Make all things yield a tone.
For them the echoes of the grove,
The flower that decks the ground,
The wind that with the branches strove
When all grew dark around,
The dew that sparkles on the rose,
The lark that sings on high,
Whatever sweetly blooming grows,
Whatever soothes a sigh.
O blissful, sweet, divinest song,
How great thy hidden might,

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To thee our praises must belong
As yielding joy and light!
Bright road apart that leads above,
And penetrates the skies,
Which youth will follow with its love,
The sage too when he dies,
As Socrates by Heaven taught,
When warnèd to apply
To Poesy where should be sought
The way in bliss to die!
O fools! O grave men falsely wise!
That thee would chase away,
Who think that nothing we should prize
But what repels thy ray.
Good sense! you cry, Philosophy!
But learn, ye sages blind,
That these in sweetest Poetry
More than in schools you find.
Who beauty seeks as child of song,
Finds far more truth than those
Who search for truth with reasons long,
While each but little knows.
Song, like the nectar of the bee,
Which from the dust of flowers
Makes honey as you daily see,
Has life within its bowers;
While you philosophers so proud
Can only tear and kill
The truths which in your webs you shroud
Till they no end fulfil.

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Poesy changes lead to gold,
  Exhaustless is its store,
While you, in gold, make us behold
  Dull dross and nothing more.
Seek elsewhere dupes you can deceive,
  Who feel no wish to fly,
Inflamed with what your science weaves,
  Which leaves them then to die.
The Poet wings an airy flight,
  But still he knows the rock,
Which yields security for night
  That will your progress mock.
For souls will in an instant see
  What never you divine,
When death removes obscurity,
  And truth unveil'd will shine.
That sense of which you proudly boast,
  Not common, so confined,
Of errors has an endless host
  To darken all the mind.
See what it makes of men and things
  Most noble, most august,
What disenchantment too it brings,
  And breed still ever must!
How holy seem'd the kingly state
  Of races that were sung,
When thrones were never in debate,
  Whose fame through nations rung!
While saints with poets were combined
  To see in kings a power,

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With heavenly things unseen entwined
To shield each private bower.
The people in them too beheld
A mystic force for good;
The crown, the palace, then were held
For Fancy's self meet food.
But what are kings when Poets fail?
What are their houses then?
Persons employ'd, or what's as stale,
Some well-paid public men.
Religion next, so sweet and pure,
Though based on heaven's plan,
Touch'd by this hideous wand, so sure,
Appears the work of man.
To pounds and shillings all reduced,
The lights, the solemn prayer;
For profit Priests are all induced
To do their office there!
No holiness in sound or sight,
No symbol in the fire;
The tapers, altars may be bright,
But all is done for hire!
The Priest, like others, all for self,
The Poet but a fool,
The one intent alone on pelf,
The other fancy's tool.
Then view it on another side,
Take life in all its trains,
Where through that range so varied wide
Do you not mark these stains?

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A pretty world they now have made,
With all this sense and prose!
Love, honour, goodness, all does fade,
As every body knows.
Love, honour high, yes, each forgotten,
By young men, selfish, base,
Something hollow, and also rotten,
Such is the dismal trace
Of real error stamp'd as truth,
Which leads from right to wrong,
While Poets ever lead our youth
From wrong to right by song.
Call error what the Poet sings,
Of course you ever may,
But, all divine, it gives us wings
To reach Truth's brightest day.
And the eternal Poet too,
Whom Joubert dares to name,
Deceives us, as illusions do
Which merit not His blame.
For 'tis to guide us they are given,
To save and not mislead,
While if to knowledge false you're driven,
From you worst ills proceed.
The positive you love to boast,
Rests on opinion still,
Dogmatic, new, destructive most,
Form truth it never will.
Yet now these sophists will suppose
That we must all agree

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In chasing poetry for prose,
To banish mystery.
But school of malediction, no,
Thy hard sharp sense we scorn,
That becomes those who impious grow,
Not man of woman born.
Thou monster, reason to confound,
Apocryphal and stale,
Thy tracks empoison all the ground,
Thy breath makes flowers pale.
Go on to boast of clear good sense,
Anatomize, defy,
Look to your coffers, count your pence
With base unlustrous eye.
But think not, spectre, silly, dull,
While working like a mole,
Thou canst the grandeur high annul
Of those who see the whole.
Heaven has granted twofold fire
To pulverize thy plan—
The poet's grace and, what is higher,
The privilege of man—
That faith with its mysterious view
Beyond the world we see,
Making the songs of poets true
Through all eternity.

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THE PAST.

SOME grave men mourn or seem to grieve
When things of old they needs must leave
All uncertain, and doom'd to perish,
However highly they may cherish
Names that in point of fact no soul
Can care for much in part or whole.

Let Niebuhr triumph, Livy fade,
Unhappy I shall not be made.
Let verbal conquests come to be
The sole theme of our minstrelsy;
But let there live in Mem'ry's hall
What critics like these can't appal,—

The homely, cherish'd, private store
On which at times we love to pore,
Of little things in times gone by,
Of anecdotes that raise a sigh,
Domestic legends, children's tales,
Of which the interest never fails.

Then let me sing of Tom the brave.
Who would not from oblivion save
That youth, the eldest of the seven,
Who when together brought down heav'n

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To make their home a scene of joy
That might the delfest pen employ—

To show how gladness reigns around
Where children such as these are found,
To tell of things from day to day
That beautify the human way,
And then—to start the struggling tears
When all this vision disappears?

Here old St. Germain's forest grand,
And its green alleys now expand.
The pony and the rides along
Might furnish matter for the song.
Adventures thicken every day,
While through each glade he shows the way.

Then let me sing of Mary Anne,
Who drew all hearts when life began
To show her what some other eyes
Had ceased to charm or to surprise.
How fresh, how lively was her glee,
The smallest pretty thing to see!

She was a fairy, tiny child,
From first to last an angel mild.
Oh, what a sweet eventful day
When first allow'd with me to stray!
Together to a wood we went,
In Paris having long been pent.

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Our friends all laugh'd, as well they might,
To think how droll must be the sight
Of such a babe and such a swell
Agreeing thus so very well.
So finding there a stately tree,
Beneath its foot we had our spree.

Methinks I see her seated there,
Her soft blue eyes, her flowing hair;
The gnarlèd roots, I see them still;
No tears were then my eyes to fill.
Oh, yes! it was a magic hour;
'Twas there began my children's bower.

She play'd, she laugh'd, she smelt each blade,
That darling, holy Mary's maid;
And think you that in life's long round,
When such a moment once was found,
Fond memory will not ever cling
To bring back each the smallest thing;

And think each item of that past
Must through eternal ages last?
For us, alas! they seem no more;
But yet they may be kept in store
For her, and others like her, blest,
Translated to the final rest.

Now let me sing of hasty flight
From Paris, all with arms bedight.

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The king has fled, the people risen;
To England many now are driven.
Our youngest Mary knows no more
But that it is a stranger's door

Through which she passes in the night,
And that is all her ground of fright.
What seek you, staring, tired child?
"My shawl," she said, while others smiled.
"I will not stop in this hotel;
For all within our own was well."

It seem'd, to hear her childish talk,
That back she was prepared to walk,
Through night, and wind, and pelting rain,
The whole long way she came by train.
Her object one—her end was there,
To the Rue Tronchet to repair,

So sweet is home to youthful heart,
And thence it is such grief to part!
For where they first have known a mother
Is home to them; they know no other.
So Mary thus prepares to go
Back,—and she says it must be so.

But here at last on English ground
See them return'd both safe and sound.
Now John, the babe that first saw light
When many were in such a fright,

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Amidst the mob and cannons' roar,
Has added to our archives' store

A fund of new, delightful themes,
To gild and charm a poet's dreams.
What strolls through Tunbridge rocks and slopes,
When every morning brought new hopes!
What boating in fair Pegwell Bay!
What songs, what tricks each night and day!

And then to think of graver things,
All fled as if with swallow's wings!
The sense, the skill, the constant prayer,
(For piety with grace was there,)
The tutor learnèd, ever kind
The chaplain with his holy mind;

The house so full, so well ordain'd,
Where all was peace, and none complain'd
The altar and observance bright,
That daily graced the morning light;
The friends, the mirth, the evening songs,
And what to sweetest home belongs!

Ah, well!—'tis bootless now to sigh;
For we, and all once ours, must die.
All must still change and pass away,
To grow up, fall, or else decay,
Rejoining things already past,
Follow'd by what no more will last.

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But if the past must fill the mind,
If in the bygone still you find
That which affects and interests most;
Whatever you may say and boast,
'Tis not of empires of old
That some will wish the years were told.

It is of early, happy days,
It is of childhood's sprightly plays,—
It is of these to you so dear,
That you would tell, to drop a tear:
There is the Livy now for you—
And there is both the past and true.

Let fates of monarchies be known,
Their grandeur we, too, freely own;
Let Mem'ry's dim mysterious hall
Present their rise, and growth, and fall;
But let there be a chamber too
For what more moves both me and you;

In which is kept for tender hearts
That which a deathless peace imparts—
The thought of those no longer here,
Whose image fadeth year by year,
Once like a part of your own being,
And now each day still farther fleeing;

And leaving only for your stay
Just that which cannot pass away—

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The shadows in your mental eye
Of those you know can never die,
Whose lives, though short, were rightly spent,
Who, leaving earth, to heaven went.

There in that vague and silent store
Where nought distinct is figured more,
'Midst years and chances all roll'd by,
'Midst thoughts of mirth that yield a sigh,
You find a help, a hope, a power,
To guard you in your final hour.

For what will seem this mortal span
So little consonant with man—
Its hopes, its evils, or its end,
When elsewhere kind heaven may intend
To finish for you that which seems,
And grant realities for dreams—

That life which nothing more can sever
From those you love, to last for ever,
That guiltless state in heaven blest,
Where ransom yields the joyful rest,
Where the forgiven, happy, free,
Reap bliss and immortality?

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EARLY LIFE.

AGAIN we sing of humble things;
We cannot rise on high;
Let others flap their spacious wings
And soar through upper sky.
For far above us is all glory;
Close to the ground we skim,
Catching at fragments of a story,
As if impell'd by whim.
Of childhood first, of boyhood next,
We'll chirrup for a while,
With traits of later youth annex'd,
That sorrow can beguile—
Experience all, no settled plan—
No tale to stir the mind—
But still things common unto man,
Which every where you find.

Childhood with its heavenly gleams
Leaves traces fair and bright;
I think from heaven are the beams
Which then entrance the sight.
That resting in the twilight gloom
To hear a brother's flute,
That circle in the little room
Where hearts are never mute;

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Those grand old pictures on the wall,
Which tell of ancient days,
Sacred, heroic, noble all,
That charm him and amaze;
Those groves and gardens wall'd around
Where first he can descry
More beauty than on earth is found,
And yet will watch the sky—
As if still distant was the place
Where he can beauty see,
Where past all walls he yet may trace
A scene of mystery,
Then the small lake with stony shore,
Where mimic rocks can stand,
When of rough flints he has a store,
And piles them with his hand:
These are the things that made him glad;
Of which the thought will last,
When heart and mind alike are sad,
And all such toys are past.
Thus child of gardens, fruits, and flowers,
Brought up 'midst fragrance sweet,
Left wild at dawn and evening hours
With shrubs as friends to meet,
Entranced in nature's brightest glee,
He knew that mother's voice;
Untaught, her beauty he can see,
Though thoughtless can rejoice.
But boyhood now comes back to view,
With its rich stores of thought,

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Which fancy ever will renew,
Though neither call'd nor sought.
That rolling at a mother's feet,
Or riding on a knee,
When a loved guest allows the treat
To yield the boy fresh glee;
That care for father though so old,
That deep respect and love,
These are the traits that may be told
With nothing to reprove.
But now the fancy wild and strong
Seeks to create and change,
By art that once did scarce belong
To landscape-gardener's range.

So paths through fields, and hills of clay
With tops of craggy form,
Are cut and piled up every day,
With no one to inform.
The paths are for the harness'd hound,
The hills to please the sight;
A project fresh is daily found
To yield some new delight;
And all the while his playmates dear
Are boys for labour born;
He sees through rags their grace appear
To shun them he would scorn.
And then the ruin'd chapel nigh,
That speaks of other days,

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Through ivy he will climb on high,
And feel a vague amaze:
For well he knows the boys his friends
Profess that ancient creed,
And nought he thinks can make amends
For spurning what they need.
And then within a nurse's press
A wondrous thing he spied—
A crucifix, o'er which a dress
Was hung, its form to hide.
So here of secrets is a store,
All is not whole and sound;
It makes him only thirst the more
For what is later found.
Now books engross him day and night,
Not such as patience try,
But stories of the red-cross knight,
And eke from Faëry-
Land that our fancy can inspire,
Though the details untrue,
While kindling a bright secret fire,
Which our wise fathers knew.
Nor can I tell with what a rage
"Evenings at Home" are read,
And Mrs. Trimmer's homely page,
With which he goes to bed;
"Sandford and Merton," Gay's sweet tales,
With cuts so fair to see,
Wild Robinson, that never fails,
"Arabian Nights" at tea.

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Such is the food at life's first stage
On which he feeds his mind,
While bread and butter 'twixt each page
Leave traces where to find
The part last tasted overnight,
On which his eyes had pored,
While conning incidents so bright
With which those books are stored.
But years roll on—the boy is grown
Some five feet tall at least,
The blades spring up from what is sown
For youth's still richer feast.
Then school-days follow on the shores
Where Father Thames supreme
Pours ever on poetic stores
To nourish youth's bright dream.
The study hot, and darksome too,
Is not without its charm,
Unfolding visions, noble, new,
To ward off what might harm.
A master kind, his daughters fair,
His schoolmates free and gay,
The row at evening—all is there,
To fill up each sweet day.
Those islands, groves, and long hot walks,
That never seem to tire;
Those river weeds, with bending stalks—
All can he then admire.
But here no wight can always stay,
To college he is sent;

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To Cambridge, I can only say,
With heavy heart he went.
The first months sad, the place so strange!
Before a year is past,
He glories in its wider range,
And wish'd it aye to last.
The world quite new, then first he can
Enjoy the pleasures high,
That indicate the growing man,
Who thinks he ne'er can sigh.
And yet while lofty classic page,
With Euclid's pleasant fruit,
Inflames him with a passion's rage
To grasp whate'er can suit
The dignity of young men grown,
Well-booted[1] and such swells,
In secret he has yet to own
The boy that still impels
His course through fens and places waste,
The ride to landmarks far;
As when the lad would seek with haste
To watch the evening star,
With innocence to make dames smile,
Who ask'd, why stroll alone?
By saying that he chose the stile,
Merely to hear the tone
Of nightingale, that simple bird,
Who loved like him to stray,

[1] This term occurs at least twenty times in the Iliad.

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When nothing else the branches stirr'd
From dusk to break of day.
But college life itself must end;
Abroad he now must speed,
Through chances still his life to spend,
With nothing much to heed;
Yet still the scenes of early joy
He visits fancy-bound,
At times the self-same giddy boy
With other pleasures found.
Ah, me! those honey-suckle bowers,
That sweet white bush of May!
I must not sing of later hours,
When with a friend he'd stray.
Oh, life! how sweet, of hope how full,
How bright thy fleeting dreams,
When the swift wherry he will pull
Beneath the summer beams!
Gazing on what his fancy paints
As life's ideal prize,
Words fail him, and his passion faints
While speaking with the eyes.
But cease the song, and let him draw
The mystic curtain low:
Enough; he felt, he loved, he saw
What life has to bestow.

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SOLITUDE.

(IMITATED FROM SCOTT.)

It was a down-struck sadden'd wight,
The merriest once before his fall;
And now for him seem'd nothing bright,
For solitude is worst of all.

Blithely he pass'd through manhood's prime,
When nothing came that could appal;
But friends dropp'd off before the time,
And solitude survived them all.

The few remaining grieved to see
How changed had now grown one so tall;
They spoke of books of chivalry,
That solitude should not be all.

For he had once in happy days
Extoll'd the grand and knightly hall;
Had tried to merit bookmen's praise—
Of solitude thought not at all.

But now in spite of all he said,
No voice removes the darksome pall;
His heart seem'd with his loved ones dead,
'Twas solitude around him all.

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And yet no heart was ever strung
Responsive more to great and small;
From no eye tears were sooner wrung
When solitude was absent all.

No heart could love with greater fire,
Free from that tedium which can pall.
Him who in loving could not tire,
Sure solitude would not befall?

But so it chanced; all fell away,
No bosom left to hear his call;
On earth he felt no other stay,
But solitude to master all.

Now all you lovers true and kind,
Some pity show to passion's thrall;
Oh, think what is the sinking mind,
Where solitude is lord of all!

THE PEDLAR.

THEY sat in the hall in much thick twilight gloom,
The wind made a sound could be heard through the room;
'Twas a wild and wet night. They sat by the fire,
And hearken'd. Each gust still seem'd to rise higher.

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"I wish," said a stranger, while poking the ashes,
"You'd tell us that tale, which so mightily clashes
With new-fangled notions about what is true,—
Of the Pedlar, I mean, which once you well knew."
"Yes; tell us that tale!" cried out loud some young voices;
But an old one that hears them by no means rejoices:
With a frown and a wink he sought to subdue
The incautious new friend of that juvenile crew;
But effort was vain, and remonstrance too late,
'Twas not deem'd a question t'admit of debate.
The other to whom the request had been made,
Just smiled, and saw clear that the debt must be paid.
'Twas idle to think of refusing them now;
He regretted, look'd thoughtful, and made a bow.
"Well, sooth," he began, then, "the tale it is old;
By your grandfather, child, to me it was told;
But still that the substance, though strange, is all true,
Is what he, surnamed good, maintain'd that he knew."
The casements they rattled as the blasts grew much higher,
The chairs made a sound as all drew round the fire;
The young ones, so anxious, now look'd at each other,
The old man seem'd wishing his anger to smother;
But no one regarded him, or seemèd to care,
While on the narrator each hearer would stare.

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"Well, since you compel me, the tale is not long,
I will not your wonder two minutes prolong.
To Laundenstown and to the halls of Kildare
A pedlar would come oftentimes with his ware;
No visitor loved more in houses around
By servants, who always in his pack had found
The different niceties, precious to each,
Let who would 'gainst love-tokens go on to preach.
But lo and behold, now some months had slipp'd by,
The pedlar he came not to ask them to buy.—
Just pause here a moment to join in their wonder,—
I pass on to matters on which you may ponder.
Some children from school coming back rather late,
'Twixt parents and master occasion'd debate.
'Pray, what is the reason, my lassie and lad,
That late you come back, and appear somewhat sad?
The path by the thicket is surely not long,
Then why do you absence so strangely prolong?'
'The wood path is short, and we know it right well,
But we came round about, if truth we must tell.
You know the old cottage that stands there alone?
Oh! there lies the cause of what makes all this moan.
Some three weeks ago, as we pass'd by the door,
We saw what determined us never no more
To pass through that thicket, though shorter the way,
Don't ask us to take it again, we all pray.
For why? since the whole secret now must be told,
Lone seated, we saw there the Pedlar so old,

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Who smiled, and said, "Children, proceed on to school,
Be kind and be good, and attentive to rule."
His looks were so awful, and haggard, and pale,
We durst not to you even tell the dread tale.'
The parents they laugh'd; and the cottage they knew;
But as for the Pedlar, they said, 'It ain't true!
For untenanted long that cottage had been,
There was not so much as a cat to be seen.'
Well, children are easily silenced through shame:
The wood still they shunn'd, but yet no one would name
The Pedlar; but other things shortly befell,
Which their elders were forced to whisper and tell.
Colonel Wolf was the lord of that lonesome wood,
In which the said cottage untenanted stood.
At length some one came to be tenant at will,
And but for what happen'd he might be so still.
But something *did* happen, the very first night,
Which caused him to yield it up all in a fright.
The peasants then laugh'd, and another was found
To hire the cottage, and with it some ground.
But soon to the landlord he made his complaint;
His hair stood on end; he felt himself faint;
Not for the Colonel and his coach and six
Would he ever himself in that tenement fix.
The first night he tried to dismiss all his fear,
Though he felt that something most dreadful was near;

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But three nights of terror were too much for him—
Set it down as his madness, folly, or whim—
But never another night under that roof
Would he seek for other additional proof,
That longer in that place he could not remain,
Let master or agent look bluff and complain.
The interested Colonel determined to try
Some practical, thorough-paced, great remedy;
He order'd the cottage, so old and decay'd,
To be new-roof'd, new-floor'd, respectable made;
When, lo! as the workmen took up the old floor,
Six inches beneath it, and quite near the door,—
I repeat, six inches below, not more deep,
The spot where the tenants attempted to sleep,
They found the poor Pedlar, besmear'd in his gore,
Known by the buckle on his neck that he wore.
A little while later some strangers with packs
Were found to be selling some few of his knacks;
Seized, tried, and convicted, they own'd all their guilt,
How for these gewgaws his blood they had spilt.
So you see how by children and poor men bold
Conclusion was brought that to all may be told.
Philosophers then, pray be counsell'd by me,
To believe that there's something far more than you see;
That Heaven has will'd—and explain it who can—
To deal thus with equity justice to man."

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SPRING.

It can't be wrong, the Muses seem to say,
When honest Nature has her own sweet way—
Nature, not selfish, false through vice and pride,
To every evil passion close allied—
But Nature vested with some charming trace
Of goodness, as with men when face to face
Their great Creator walk'd and found all good,
While His wise plan each rightly understood.
How odd you can't accord, O gravity,
What is divine with our humanity!
Since from their union personal begins
All our religion, that which heaven wins.
Sensations with our sentiments should flow,
To act with wisdom in this scene below.
Love odours, sounds, and tastes, and also lines,
Or Joubert says, thy judgment scarcely shines.
Heaven grants gifts for body and for soul;
Durst thou object and not accept the whole,
Assume one-half and then disdain the other,
This is thy reason and thy heart to smother.
But let us now leave pedants to their talk—
The Spring invites us forth to take a walk.
The heart, we know, has logic of its own,
Which with this smiling landscape is in tone.
Let sophists boast deductions of their head;
Let others feel, and nothing more be said.

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Heaven! how lovely is this scene around!
The whole wide air is fragrant from the ground,
The slopes so soft, the thicket now so green,
Where at each trunk some flower new is seen.
Hark to the thrush that chants from bough to bough,
Even brown nightingale sits singing now.
The stain'd rocks also fascinate the eye,
While over all the pure and glorious sky
Invites you still, however wild, and fond
To think of what lies farther and beyond.
Yet, after all, interrogate a breast,
And hear a secret honestly confess'd.
There's something more than what the eye can see,
Somewhat allied with Nature's mystery.
It is for mental wants you would provide,
While casting errant looks on every side;
For what avails the sense of all these charms,
If your lone heart be empty as your arms?
Of what avail to hear the birds rejoice,
If to your ear there comes no tender voice,
Soft and yet merry, musical in tone,
Quick to reply responsive to your own?
Baptist Montauban, straying through the wood,
(Nodier only could pourtray his mood,)
Will answer for us, and convince you soon,
That death for some states is a peerless boon.
Unlustrous even seem these evening skies,
If you see watching them no other eyes,
Rapt and deep pensive at the glorious view,
While turning still from time to time on you.

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Why do some places draw you to them still?
'Tis not the charm of street, or wood, or hill,
But that some hope or memory you trace
Connected with a sweet and thoughtful face,
Which makes an anxious solitary mind
Expect in spots like these his all to find,—
I mean that all which Nature can bestow,
And needs for its completion here below.
'Tis with that hope he feels his thoughts to burn,
When only seeming free to take a turn
Through scenes, however pleasant to the sight,
Which of themselves could never so delight;
Though here, I know not how, but it is so,
This landscape beauty causes love to grow:
As if some fairy caused alliance bright
Between heart-love and scenes that please the sight.
And hence its right source, also we surmise,
Springing up too from morn and evening skies.
The blue so delicate, the glow so pure,
Have a connexion constant, close, and sure,
With what needs hope in prospect for the day,
Or sweet contentment when 'tis pass'd away.
The violet, I know, will scent the air,
Even without the presence of the fair;
The daisies still will sparkle at your feet,
Though other two your own are not to meet;
But all this beauty, all this charming view,
Will still prove spiritless and lost for you,
Unless there's one congenial to your soul,
With whom you gaze to wonder at the whole.

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Her smiles so gentle, and her eyes so blue,
You know from first her nature must be true;
Her voice so delicate, so soft, so small,
Once that you hear it at her feet you fall;
Her memory enhances music's tone,
Making its pathos and its sweets your own;
As if *your* secret had inspirèd all,
And to no others such things can befall.
'Tis she who yields a charm to each sweet hour,
Whose presence sole would constitute a bower,
Though amidst naked plains you take your way,
And feel the rigour of a winter's day.
What will it make of scenes so bright as this,
Where no enchantment of the earth you miss?
Sooth, all this beauty, when the Spring is here,
Another Eden will to you appear,
Leaving you voiceless, rapt in mystic joy,
When to delight another you employ
All that remains to you of figured speech,
Which with your eyes and lips and smiles can teach
That soft devoted friend who strays with you,
How with a lover's heart you all things view.
That sinking sun, that sweet pale evening star,
Bathe you in bliss that once you thought so far
Removed, and to your nature still denied,
With no one yours to sit so by your side.
Now, with another, while you feel the Spring,
With birds, and hills, and flowers you can sing
The praise of Him, who made and gave them all;
And from your breast will pass the heavy pall.

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Oh, truths divine! oh, goodness shown to man,
While yet an exile in the mortal span!
While beauty thus encompasses you round,
More than the beautiful for sight is found.
Oh, happy lovers! constant, warm, and true!
How can I fitly praise or sing of you?
Yours are the joys that flow from soul to soul,
Beyond what all mere reason can control,
The reflex seen, and watch'd in other's eyes,
To fill responsive bosoms with surprise,
Each beauty multiplied a thousandfold,
More than can ever yet be thought or told.
Yours are the joys that spring from courage high,
When to defend another you defy
All that can threaten loveliness and peace,
From which before you would have sought release.
Of her you love you feel yourself the stay,
The champion sworn in old high knightly way;
That will suffice to make your bosom swell
With grandeur, such as tongues can never tell;
Yours will be youthful, pure, and noble thought,
With secrets to cause pride, what's more, that ought:
For hearts united must still secret be,
Bound to each other with some mystery.
The world may know what's open to the eyes,
But they know what its scrutiny defies;
Secrets, no doubt, that int'rest them alone;
But such to Nature give a joyful tone,
Yielding a soft and humorous delight
In all that comes, in any form, in sight,

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Making their manners gentle, *débonnaire*,
Themselves the pride and idols of the fair.
Declaim, frown, grumble then whoever will,
Oh, love, to thee belong our praises still!
To sing at ease of thy sweet private bliss,
Agrees but little with an age, like this,
Of tunnels, steam-engines, and placing money
At int'rest, Jew-like, and of hearts quite stony,
Of drainage, and of palaces to hold
All that of nations can be bought and sold;
When upon iron rails as hard men fly,
Dreaming of love as little as to die.
A cheque or balance is by far more sweet
Than greening knees the primroses to meet.
To count your guineas yields more tender joy,
Than the few words that sweetest friends employ.
The wind may warble, and the great stars shine,
But it is gold that makes the night divine.
Unhappy victim of the sophist's plan,
To lower all the dignity of man!
Methinks with all thy cleverness I see
Some heart-moved Mirabeau apply to thee
The words with which, like eagle soaring o'er,
He darted down, and the ignoble tore
In Barnave, who now trembled at his voice,
While even impious hearers did rejoice.
"Barnave!" he said, with an indignant frown,
While his poor threaten'd victim cower'd down,
"Barnave, avaunt! speechless and conquer'd be,—
No touch of the divine is found in thee;"

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Oh, love! at thee let such men scorn and rail,
Nathless thy power with us will never fail.
I see them mute-struck, vanquish'd by a song,
Which tells of what to thee must still belong;
And sooth amidst these cohorts proud and stern,
Some have soft hearts, that after thee will yearn.
To these I sing, still youthful in their mind;
Tender, devout, so manly, being kind.
When these approve, I all the world defy;
Our hearts above them, soar beyond the sky,
Where love like theirs, coeval with their breath,
Sings, smiles, and reigns triumphant over death!

COMMON PEOPLE'S VIRTUES.

God bless you, our Laureate Poet! you have warbled a simple song,—
Of the dear quiet graces I envy, that to commonest people belong;
The grandmother, so well you paint her, I think that her too I have known,
Myself all caress'd and esteem'd by her, as one for some reason her own.

The mother and sister, and wife of the poor youth—he is no man at all,
Who to oblige her would not strive, and to defend her not fall;

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Who would not his blood like the water be content
to pour out on the ground,
For hearts like theirs, sweet and so tender, which
still in the people are found.

God help you, proud mortal, and haughty! forgive
you for those silly airs,
When led by some chance or dull motive to mount
up some poor humble stairs,—
Those stately airs, foolish and awkward, as if truly
you would condescend,
Instead, like a man, of your feeling a mere simple
and honest true friend.

But come now to see in itself the thing which we
like so to praise,
Some droll little pictures will show you, how charm-
ing are ever such ways!
"'Tis Harry, grandmother, that's come here" (I
only want now you to see
How homely and even right pleasant too, some
sprigs of all classes can be).

"Harry, come in, and sit down there; here is grand-
mamma with me at last:
To see London, dear soul, she wants now; 'tis forty
long years that are past
Since she left our own poor native cottage, though
by no means the place is so far;
But all the same, still to keep her there, she ever
found some mighty bar.

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"I thought to her bed she'd gone long while, at least had lain down for a nap;
But, bless her sweet old heart, 'twas only to put on her new pretty cap!
Dear grandmother, please, will you show us that print you so very much prize,—
The head of our Saviour, which always used of old to content so your eyes?

"Harry will know how to paint it, and make it still fairer to see,
You see all these pictures around you; you know who 'twas gave them to me."
Thus where could you find more true duty, more gratitude fond for the old,
Than in Georgie, so handsome and free too, though she says that for others she's cold?

Now St. Mary's cottage next opens, I know not indeed why so call'd;
The garden has ten feet to boast of, an arbour, and what's more, 'tis wall'd.
Two young sisters are here with a brother often from time to time;
And the three with domestic affection show how love and all graces can chime;

While all on their work or their chance perhaps must for a living depend,
As having no great wealth to reckon on, or much ready money to spend.

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Alice is all for her funny tricks, but Harriet is far more discreet;
Tom has a strange pensive air with him, as if for a young student meet:

A quiet, and handsome, and brave lad, and in town quite a too thoughtful youth,
Whose words, with his accent and eyes too, denoted his constant truth.
In Alice you had wit join'd with sense, and every sweet darling grace;
Sprightliness, arch tricks, and mirth to light up her fairy face.

She could ride with you over the hills; for ever I think she could walk;
She could row, above all she could sing; and nothing was like her talk,
So full of droll sayings and slang, so full of exuberant glee;
But of course above all 'twas her singing, that could entrance both you and me,—

The Mistletoe Bough, Ocean's Shells, above all, Poor Old Nelly Blye:
I never hear these sung at present, but the tears flow hot from my eye.
But what is the use of complaining? I ask now my own heart for one;
The best and the brightest pass quickest;—they were here, and lo now they are gone!

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But stop now, I must not forget here, her pity for
all that were sad;
Though hardly of her I can speak still, without
feeling like some one half mad.
A boy with his leg freshly cut off was deputed to
call at her door,
To get some relief from another, who knew that his
fate she'd deplore;

She gave what was left for him kindly, she bade him
come into her hall,
She burst into tears when she heard him, she added
from her little all.
So she gave what the rich seldom think of, she gave
him her pitying woe;
I need not go on with the fond tale, it all now is
past long ago.

Then Harriet, Alice loved her so right well, so
different yet in her ways!
She goes to her wedding a bride's-maid: as if only
for that day Death stays.
She felt sick, but nothing could stop her, she went
all so pretty in white,
There, at that marriage so wished for, was closed all
her earthly delight.

Oh, to think of the joy and the anguish! and to
think that it all now is past,
But such is our life, say the people, and there's
nothing that's fair that can last.

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But Harriet so wise and so prudent, you find her now here a blest mother;
But though of her baby enamour'd, keep thinking she will of that other.

Then Charlie, the husband she dotes on, how constant and loving is he,
Those who don't find your common men's virtue, are only resolved not to see.
But Tom, oh, that young loving brother! so bound up with Alice in heart,
Shall we leave him without one return? from him, too, for ever to part?

How fondly they play'd when together, how she would pull him about!
Lift him, and tease him, and taunt him, and pinch him until he cried out.
Go where you will through the city, while looking on all whom you meet,
Where do you find so much innocence, or where an expression so sweet?

I wish while her picture I painted, that I had said far more of him;
To her he was food for all hours; she made him resemble her whim.
Standing up for the truth that he loved best, he'd leave her with tears in his eyes;
With no other reasons remaining, to his poor beloved fiddle he flies.

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But all that she said was through fun; for the same
truth she loved quite as well,
So now she would kiss him and hug him, and all
this most lovingly tell.
I think I have said quite enough of my theme to
feel now pretty sure;
So if you want pictures of goodness, go seek them
in dwellings obscure.

The manly and humble united, the girl with ex-
quisite grace,
The brother so kind and so gentle, his soul all with-
out on his face—
I knew them when once all were happy, but one
has departed and fled;
That's sufficient to make us all thoughtful, and pray
for her till we are dead.
And sometimes I fancy you blame me, for telling a
tale that's so old,
But it's much if I only convince you that we all are
of one self-same mould.

TO MARY.

I KNOW a child of nature and of grace,
I will not, Mary, name her to your face,
Though truth is bold, and it is truth I say,
Blush, or accuse me as you think you may

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Of flattery vile, from which my soul is free,
While fixing thus a piercing eye on thee.
Mary, thou child, don't quarrel with my song,
That word, at least, must to thee still belong;
And "child," you know, in these our wiser days,
No praise, no title to esteem conveys.
You ask for verses suited to your age,
As if, forsooth, I were some light-foot page.
Well, then, no retrospects for your young years;
For, who would wish to see renew'd your tears?
Let me then sing of what is bright and fair;
Revert to past things now I should not dare.
Heroic, just, impetuous and true,
Of course 'tis clear I am not meaning you—
You are the opposites;—well, be it so;—
But some are such you fancy or you know;
Then when these gifts perspicuous abound,
Believe me, the road of honour has been found.
Life is a battle; meet it and be strong:
Such is the first part of this simple song.
You'll hear of people bold and free of speech,
And all the while 'tis weakness that they teach.
Quite singular how rational they grow
Whene'er of any noble act they know.
To laugh down first impressions is their way,
For noble deeds and fancies never pay.
Slaves of the great, resolved to shun offence,
Ready for every meanness with pretence,
Arm'd with sophisms to smother all the fire
Which generous words and actions would inspire,

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Adepts to mock at chivalry and song,
Skill'd to defend and countenance a wrong,
Lions in voice, but hares to fly away,
While girls like you so resolutely stay,
Intent as you on duty to the last,
Reading the present ever in the past;
While braggarts cower, justify, excuse,
And holy moderation's name abuse.

When such examples come within your sight,
You'll deem, perhaps, that I was in the right
For praising that which foremost was in view,
When I consider'd what is found in you.
Of tender heart, as soft as it is brave,
Not you, of course, I mean, for I must save
My ears from fresh taunts darted with new fire,
That indicate almost a real ire,
But where there's evidence in any wight,
That such a nature lurks in what is bright,
The way lies open for the truest glory
That ever yet was heard in song or story,
To raise the soul above the brilliant skies,
Filling with tears the rapt, admiring eyes
Of all who can appreciate what's best,
And feel in goodness is the surest rest.
Let science boast, and magnify the man
Who its true conquests or pretended can
Pursue and realize with lasting fame,
That which can then immortalize his name;
But let it know that Love still higher flies
Than he who can measure worlds in the skies.

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Sublime enjoyment science can impart,
But all is nothing to a woman's heart.
Yes, all is nothing in regard to bliss,
Which your cool knowing ones so often miss.
Of love our words can ne'er express the joy,
And 'tis the heart alone we must employ
To feel the sweetness of that heavenly dew
Reserved for all who thus resemble you.
The truth escapes me! bless us! well, I never!
But from the cause yourself you cannot sever.
Still to proceed, and others have in view;
I see more graces that for some are new;
I see observant, quick, and piercing eyes,
To judge of characters through all disguise;
But what is strange, and seldom thus combined,
I see withal a fair construction, kind,
Put upon words and actions that might be
A theme for anger and eke calumny.
I see (and this I own I love the best)
Freedom for all, and innocence at rest,
Not at vain strife with others, right or wrong,
But cheerful, hopeful, turning all to song.
No thought of evil lurking in the mind,
No wish our liberty to crush and bind;
No gloomy censures, no pedantic whine,
Of inward murkiness a likely sign;
No wish to hinder or curtail our flight,
However long we may be out of sight,
A face of smiles, that like your sunbeams fall
To nourish, purify, and gladden all.

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Well, I have done, and ill, you would have said it,
Done for myself, and forfeited all credit;
No doubt the girls are always in the right,
Intention with them ever is so bright!
You little thought when asking in a hurry
For my light verse, that you I meant to flurry;
You thought all open, without danger near,
To make you scamper off, or vain appear:
So you see now, remember it well then,
Really, in truth, there is no trusting men.
But come, since thus *my* song has been received,
There is another, if I may be believed;
Your song, so sweet, so potent, and so clear,
That to forgive me it will bring all near,
With which, O Mary, fly this ambuscade!
And then contented we shall all be made.

PRIMROSE HILL.

SWEET Primrose Hill, and summer's eve,
Of both I mean to sing!
Come, scornful airs I prithee leave,
And list a tiny thing

Of love, and youth, and holidays,
Of sunshine, and of flowers,
Of common people's homely ways,
Cross hedges, and through bowers.

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Parnassus, Mont Blanc, Snowdon's top,
Let others seek such heights;
Within a mile or two I stop,
And breathe the summer nights.

But first and foremost for the name,
Already here's a doubt;
For Shakspeare would usurp the fame,
And Primrose quite cut out.

Yet both are sweet, I do declare,
Both fit a poet's song;
To change the first I hardly dare,
Which did of old belong

To the steep hill we have in view,
That rises like a mound,
Though Shakspeare's name, however new,
Would dignify the ground.

But why should they not both agree?
Our Shakspeare is a flower;
While primrose and our poet's tree
Combine to make our bower.

Bless us! how our spirits rise,
How we love the summer skies!
How we run, and how we amble,
The verse itself I see will gambol!

Digitized by Google

What can be a fairer sight,
When the sun is shining bright,
Than crowds upon a holiday,
All hither come to frisk and play?

Let us follow, come along,
Hearts beat quickly, as the song.
Then first upon the grass we lay,
The air perfumed with new-mown hay,

Which wafted to us from the west,
Invited us to stop and rest,
To watch the children with their kite,
Controlling its eccentric flight.

But somehow where we stand or lie,
Is never what most charms the eye;
Always beyond, and farther still
It seems; and thither fly we will.

So on we jog, through fields enclosed,
The farthest, fairest still supposed;
The heights we reach of Hampstead range,
And there arrived, by way of change,

We hire horses, haste away,
For long in no spot can we stay.
So Highgate, Finchley, soon are pass'd,
Through Hendon and the Hyde at last;

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She before, and he behind,
Speeding faster than the wind.
Only time to cast a glance
On its water's sweet expanse.

But now completed is our ride,
The hirèd skirt is laid aside;
Fresh as the lark, and quite as gay,
We take our nearest homeward way,

Through fields, now white, and pink, and blue,
From gowns of each and every hue.
Oh, how the children laugh and run!
You'd think the fête was but begun.

One family you'd think it all,
Both boys and girls, and young men tall;
With mothers, aunts, and jolly sires,
Their eyes all lit with kindly fires.

Once more upon our classic hill,
The way seems barr'd for each, until
He joins the circle, for the ring,
In which I see no monstrous thing.

For how can days be better closed,
Unless some vice unseen's supposed,
Than by giving friendly token
With the lips, though nothing spoken?

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But now in sooth the spirits flag,
And all do long for home;
While after us our legs we drag,
So far we had to roam.

Then eastward, southward, westward, ho!
We scatter through the park,
Trailing, hauling, hasting, tired so;
It now has grown quite dark.

Oh, scenes so sweet, of union free!
Oh, human faces dear!
What more charming can there be
To witness and to hear?

While some despise as but too real
The joy of fields and streets,
To Poet 'tis a life ideal
When loving those he meets—

Ideal of a heavenly kind
To meet each other so,
To make serene the heart and mind,
And all fair graces grow.

Then what are your exclusive haunts
But paddocks for the sick?
What are your vain and silly taunts
But their dull owner's trick?

Digitized by Google

By river's banks, the path along
To me is grander far,
For leading such a happy throng
Beneath the evening star.

For painted roof give me the sky,
For salons, the gay street,
For vouchers, a contented eye,
For friends, the first you meet.

But cease, nor talk the night away;
Besides, we all are tired;
Heaven send us such another day,
So fit to be admired!

How can we be here sitting still,
Attending to what's said?
Come, Alice, Harriet, Tom, and Will,
You all should be in bed.

THE TWO BEAUTIES.

A CONTRAST.

WHAT difference in human kind!
Just for a moment let your mind
Regard two persons,—only two,
I'll sketch them. Here they are for you.

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Then softly sweet beyond the tone
That other music e'er could own,
A voice you hear within the door,
And, though you never knew much more,
To you the point would be quite clear
That some true type of love was near.

Advancing then you meet the fairy,
Her looks, her words, her steps quite airy;
Her face from first will please you well,
Though what there's in it you can't tell,—
In no part faultless the material,
In each some touch of the ethereal.
There's nothing pompous, dull, and proud,
Which emptiness within can shroud;
But there's that moulding by a heart
Which peerless beauty can impart;
A something arch and childlike too;
Nothing put on for you to view.
But what with face, and "Well, I never!"
Already you are caught for ever;
Just so, for ever! question none.
Ere I could wink you're lost and won.
I, who had known her then so long,
Will now to paint her sing my song.

Sprightly and full of girlish fun,
Her sense before the day is done
You learn to estimate, and see
In her a theme for minstrelsy.

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At first you thought her only witty;-
But soon you find her full of pity,
Tender and loving, and yet brave,
If you from chagrin she can save.
So unaffected, arch, and free,
Quite ready any thing to be
Either to fascinate or serve
Those who from nature never swerve;
Mirthful, and playful when you're near,
Sure when you leave to shed a tear;
Sure to be with you to the last,
And then a look of anguish cast,
That burns and that consumes your heart,
Though only for a month you part.
For baseness with a high disdain;
Averse of persons to complain;
Too innocent to face the world,
Though through it from her childhood whirl'd.
When wrong'd, she deeply feels the smart,
Though laughter may unbidden start.
Careless, and easy, ever kind,
For all she shows a sweet, dear mind;
Keen to admire what is best,
And overlooking all the rest;
The last to see a fault in you;
Indulgent and forgiving too;
In all detecting something sweet,
Though only sauntering in the street,
She teaches you to use your eyes,
And see some virtue to surprise

Digitized by Google

You who before had pass'd them all
Unmoved by either great or small.
Thoughtful, and nervous, full of fears,
When of the world's ill deeds she hears,
Young as she is, her thought still flies
To what awaits her when she dies.
She feels that secret inward fire
Which sweetest natures will inspire;
Of heart too tender in its mould
For living where so much is cold,
She yearns for that bright tranquil shore
Where disappointment stings no more.
Sparkling, and beauteous, like a star,
She ever shines to you from far.
You leave her without dreaming fears;
The moment come—she disappears.

But now the other has to sit;
You know at first I promised it.
But, bless me! what a voice is there!
The very dog flies down the stair.
What rustling of the pompous gown!
She enters smiling, half a frown.
I place my brushes on the table;
To paint just now I am not able.
Madam (or Miss, or what you will,
That she's no woman I think still),
To you I beg to wish good day;
For hence in truth I must away.

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And if you want your picture done,
Some other artist can be won,
From top to toe to paint you well;
Such pictures too are sure to sell.
For nothing's prized upon the whole
But what can live without a soul,
Without a heart to stir up thought
Of silly things that are not bought.
In you that artist's sure to find
What suits the world and its whole mind.
Of course we cannot change our nature,
And you are fair in outward feature.
I would no woman ever vex,
But those you speak to doubt your sex.
And after all, whate'er I think on,
'Tis something else your will is set on;
And doubtless you discharge an end
For which I think you cannot mend.
Really too we should not mock
These tempers causing such a shock.
They have their use, like other things;
They serve to clip too wanton wings;
And that repentance always brings.
'Tis well, in mercy for some sinner,
Of heaven now through them a winner,
To torture him whose gold they cherish,
That finally he may not perish.
In truth, no one should wish you ill,
Seeing the end that you fulfil.

Digitized by Google

Of course the painter should be stinted;
This mission need not broad be hinted;
Nor yet exactly put that face on
Which shows your task in the creation.
Unlike yourself look if you can;
But to paint *you* I'm not the man.

POULIGUEN.

I KNOW a lonely wood of pines;
'Tis sweet in summer there
To listen how the west wind whines
Through tops in dulcet air.

Some children flying from the heat
Will thither often roam;
Some fair ones too you're sure to meet;
'Tis but a step from home.

With books or toys they all are found
For study or for play;
They sit or roll upon the ground
Throughout the live-long day.

A priest walks by; 'tis Breton soil,
He prays and passes soon;
Escaped from city's loud turmoil,
The silence is a boon.

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'Tis Breton ground; that is to say,
No danger lurketh there.
He sits or saunters on his way,
And sings his noontide prayer.

Oh, charm of nature, quiet, blest,
To innocence so dear!
Where heart and mind can find their rest,
And no enchantment fear.

This wood so wild and straggling spread,
And standing near the beach,
With sea-fowl soaring overhead,
Can thus a lesson teach.

For here, you know, with faith around,
On all the paths you see,
No disaccord of thought is found
If you are also free.

The wood is holy, safe, and pure;
Those meeting you disown
All thoughts of which you can be sure
They would mislead your own.

So, fancy free, like skies serene,
Or beauty in the flower,
You find no dark mist intervene
With secret blighting power.

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But there you are, and no bird meeter
To warble and rejoice;
Each new thought than the last still sweeter,
Approved by inward voice.

Pavilions cheerful line the shore;
The sea rolls warm and clear;
Of faults and sorrows now no more
You think, nor magic fear.

In sight is Evens, island lair
Of sea-birds great and small;
Approach—they darken all the air
That seem'd grim natives tall.

The cormorants, they stand in file
Upon the sandy heights;
A stranger's eye they can beguile;
Their very stature frights.

The pines they reach the sunny plain;
The salt hills quaint and white,
Like a vast camp spread from the main,
Surprise your charmèd sight.

There files of half-wild, savage nags,
On various zig-zag roads,
Bestrid by boys and empty bags
Fast gallop back for loads,

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Or heavy-laden, pace it slow,
While all the ground does glitter
Between the ponds so stagnant, though
For health it's all the fitter.

Beyond, on hills so clear and blue,
Guérand's vast old walls lour;
Westward gay Croissic is in view,
With Bourg-de-Batz' high tower.

There stands the chapel, roofless, grey,
Where Kerbouchard so bold
First met upon his homeward way,
As legends fine have told,

The maid De Sesmaisons, so long
From his embraces torn,
While he in England did prolong
A captive's fate forlorn.

But Croissic, with its waters clear,
That wind so blue and wide,
Seems calling Vernet to appear,
To paint its sparkling tide,

With sails of every form so bright,
That tack and scud away,
A picturesque and gladsome sight,
Upon a summer's day,

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When fishermen, with saints for guides[1],
Receive you with such glee,
Whose boat-race yearly still provides
True Breton sport to see.

Another wood some note demands,
Where, hid from public road,
The once gay Lesnérac still stands,
Of owls the grim abode.

The grass-grown court you cross with dread,
Such solitude now reigns!
What woes once here! if all were said[2],
But no one now complains.

Now back with our kind cheerful host
We speed our homeward way,
A roof like his aye pleases most,
Through whate'er woods we stray.

'Tis night; the rockets fly through air,
O'er crowds to see the fête
Of Louis, and Louisa fair,
May blessings be her fate!

But what Louisa? do you ask,
Her name I give to you,
Although it finishes my task,
And proves it needless too.

[1] All this from life.
[2] Here dwelt Mdlle. de Sesmaisons.

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Praise Pouliguen another day,
And your descriptions spare;
It always is enough to say
The D'Esgrignys are there.

WOMAN.

THE song is woman! Oh, the bright, sweet aim!
What human lips will breathe a thought of blame?
I sing of woman, man's intense delight,
When all within him is serene and bright.
At home a queen in cottages or halls,
In church a saint with whom one kneeling falls.
In woods a nymph dispensing joy and glee,
At work a fairy full of mystery.
My harp is harsh, my voice, and all the rest,
To sound symphonious on a theme so blest.
Let's touch with careless finger its poor strings,
A vision still before our eyes it brings,
Of something clad with stars and summer light,
To soothe the heart and elevate the sprite;
Though as I sing, each theme, I fear and think,
Will always far below its level sink.
But woman can our weakness all supply,
And give a key-note by her first heaved sigh.
"You think me cold," she says, "let me be tried,"
Such is her answer when she is belied.

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Then see her sprightly, arch, unskill'd to blame,
When heard, enchantment, and when seen the same.
Yes; true enchantment to transform a soul,
And make it feel the grandeur of the whole;
Comprising that divine sweet mystery,
When nature unlike man wills her to be:
Wills, with an art that she will still employ,
Declining what would mar and taint her joy;
As when from politics each woman flies,
Knowing a year so spent her beauty dies[1].
Her slights too with her silence, seeming cold,
Are all but veils for love that can't be told.
Then what expressive greetings when you meet,
The accent laid to sound so softly sweet,
When now tho' three months absence scarce are past,
Her first sole words emphatic are "*At* last!"
With smiles as if you had just come from Troy,
After some ten long years to light up joy.
These are the traits that sink into the mind,
Proving her ever gentle, faithful, kind.
Let her contest and baffle all my will,
I love, I dote on, I proclaim her still
Entitled to succeed and to prevail,
Though argument and logic her should fail.
For let her soar or seek whate'er she will,
Her truest glory's to be woman still.
But eyes of woman can divine a soul,
A stranger passes, and they know the whole.

[1] A. Karr. Les femmes

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What are they then when turn'd upon a friend?
They need no words their potency to spend.
Thou creature, gentle, mirthful, and half wild,
So wise, so prudent, and yet still a child!
This thing or that you want? Well, be it so!
Were it my death you ask, I say not no.
"I only, silly, want a locket bright."
Then it is beauty that attracts your sight;
And what bespeaks a finer, fairer soul
Than such a taste all passions to control?
For here at least in England are but few,
Who like French upstarts lace alone would view,
Exchanging what is pretty for the dear,
Lest quite distinguish'd they should not appear.
Of course I know that often you admire
Things that you see, and will our patience tire;
Some boyish hat, tipt with a tiny wing
Scarlet or white, heel'd boots, or pretty thing
Like quaint straw bundles with their drops of dew,
Or ribbons to stream down and all quite new,
Or gloves, or Polish jacket, or a frock
Made like our coats with pockets,—let them mock!
The youngsters, forward, impudent, and sly,
When they remark you as you pass them by.
But what conclusion should we justly draw
From noting all these wonders that we saw?
It is not with amaze to fill some eyes
That she does all, at least to do it tries;
'Tis not to cause some envious looks to turn,
To show how jealous bosoms sometimes burn.

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'Tis but the wish to please that causes all.
I wish *our* failings could be thought as small.
However, now no more detail'd precision;
Hear the result of my mature decision;
Were it still *that* you want, or only *this?*
Your force resistless lies within a kiss.
You know it too, you arch one, though you frown,
'Tis only at your feet to bring us down.
So ask—still ask; I yield, I am not mine,
For great or little things I still am thine;
Thine to amuse you in a mirthful hour,
Thine to console you when the times will lour,
Thine to assist you in your groundless fears,
Thine with a kiss to wipe away your tears,
Thine aye to follow you through flood, through fire,
Thine to defend, to love, and to admire,
Thine to submit, to promise and fulfil,
Thine to consent to thy sweet harmless will.
Oh, woman, child, girl, balm of all true hearts,
Thy presence Paradise itself imparts!
Even what's more, while artless, simply true,
Wisdom with goodness will be found in you.
The dignity of maiden, modest, fair,
Is that to which we nothing can compare.
It is not pride, and still less vain pretence,
It is the majesty of inward sense,
Shining so calm and quietly in eyes,
Which what's unseemly scorneth and defies.
And then when age has changed the smoothest bark,
'Tis still the woman that you have to mark.

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The poplars may show rugged to the eye,
Within, her youth to her is ever nigh
'Tis said in books that sometimes do her wrong,
Her heart is young and sweet as poet's song.
Unselfish, noble, strong, and ever kind,
A guardian Angel true in her you find,
Still prompting others to subdue their hate,
Like Josephine, so meek, compassionate.
Though life's sweet dawn no longer lights her face,
Retaining not the less her former grace,
The arch, the deep considerate you find,
The nameless charms of the female mind.
Oh, base the wretch who turns thy age to jest,
And in thy bosom, Woman, feels not blest!
For what life happy, kind, contented, here
Where thou with love respected art not near?
Attentive creature, thoughtful, ever kind,
She hopes to guide, and to exalt our mind.
Untaught she does it; for succeed she will,
Though silent at our side she sits so still,
Her tissues sewing with a hasty stitch,
Most innocent and fair, and yet a witch;
For what but magic is that mystic spell
Which makes us think her silence ever well,
Her want of words a spring, a tide of joy,
When clever speech from others would annoy?
Woman though out of sight, no less you find,
Our minds can lead to love all human kind.
You can't but love what she bears in her heart,
And so she can the love of each impart.

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Passing, you see no man, or boy, or lad,
For whom some woman would not be right sad,
If aught of ill should take him by surprise,
And so you look on each with woman's eyes.
A manly temper with a woman's soul,
In these of Nature's good you have the whole.
Let Greece and Rome acknowledge here their part,
Their poets hardly knew the woman's heart;
Though here and there they praise a noble deed,
To see the whole, 'tis other eyes they need.
Be ours those eyes, O ever to survey
The tender shades which they do not pourtray.
Of her when singing in the simplest way,
We could for ever still find what to say,
And rightly too, for if with this sweet love
Our bosoms burn, the blessèd there above
Smiling, look down, and cannot but approve.
Sweet woman's nature ever is the same,
Though forms may vary even with their name.
Sweet in the old régime preserving grace,
Sweet in the new which needs not that displace.
Sevigné, Luxembourg, and countless more,
Can show that sweetness in the days of yore.
Montagu, flower of De Noailles bright,
Can represent it amidst terror's might[2].
While those now freed from ancient etiquette,
Gracious and truthful still each day are met.

[2] Marquise de Montagu, Paris, 1865. Chez Dentu.

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Proving the system of "no rule"—"what harm?"
The force of nature cannot yet disarm
That woman's nature, not to be put down,
However on it times may seem to frown;
Always beginning, let what happen will,
The joy of man, his own good angel still;
Divining ever what is for the best,
Inspiring order even in the rest;
Before whose owners each day more and more,
Poetic truth can open all its store.
For being less restrain'd by form and rule,
Not the less worthy of the ancient school.
For being less a mere house-plant at home,
Not harder to find lovely when we roam.
Traditions, manners, social rules may die,
But, Woman! thou all changes may'st defy.
Thy little secrets science all transcend,
When peaceful life is our acknowledged end.
Oh, what sweet secrets in this world so cold!
While statesmen's mysteries are often told,
Between us only all these wonders known,
When thou wilt call me graciously thine own!
And rightly; for in all things I am thine,
I've nothing wholly that I know of mine.
Thine own, this moment and for ever too,
Through ages countless, hidden from our view;
Yes, yes, I feel true love must ever last;
For it there's nothing can be ever past.
May I be ever docile to thy nod!
Hearts truly with thee also are with God.

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And this, besides, the East proclaims to you—
"If woman's pleased, then so is Heaven too."
Accordant thus with nature's wondrous law,
May nothing from thy love me ever draw!
By men deceived, forgotten, angry made,
By thee, O woman! never yet betray'd.
And yet within thy power I often lay,
But trust in thee, of safety is the way:
For me thy weakness was true strength of soul,
For thee occasion show'd thou couldst control
All thought of interest separate from mine,
Therefore till death still hear that I am thine.
To me from early youth thus faithful, true,
All that I loved, still love, and ever knew
Has only verified the ancient rule
He who neglects thee is, in brief, a fool.
What must he be who dares to scorn and slight
Thy innocence, thy mission, and thy light;
Like those who true theology abuse,
And to malign thy influence will choose?
But thou canst pity those then sunk so low,
Though wonder only others could bestow.
Woman, thy holy heart will no one blame,
By instinct taught to soar above such shame.
But when of stupid madness thus we hear,
Thy matchless graces then will most appear.
Through life I sought thy favour and thy praise,
To love thee still on earth my spirit stays;
Not with a view to compromise a heart,
By causing any one to share a part

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Again with one that's destined to have sorrow,
To-day as yesterday, the same to-morrow;
But to feed fondly on that mental charm
Which Fate itself in some way can disarm.
O woman, far and ever far from me
Be the bad wish to draw my griefs on thee!
Let mine be dreams, a distant memory far,
For that alone can serve me as a star.
When thoughtless, thy deep heart can move us more
Than all cold rules from wisdom's vaunted store;
When prudent, thy light so sparkling and sure
Can teach us joys that ever will endure.
Thee would I serve with faithful, honest breath;
Thine would I be in anguish and in death.
Who calls this fanciful, extreme, absurd?
Has he not seen, and mark'd, and even heard,
That to love, cherish, and to worship thee
Is to be manly, happy, bold, and free?
Thou art mysterious, gay, and yet profound;
In thee a nameless good will still be found.
Why should such thoughts be counted wild and strange?
Search through the universe and all its range,
Nought you will hear but this one constant tone,
It is not good for man to be alone;
And lone he is though moving in a throng,
If no sweet contrasts to himself belong.
Woman, those contrasts thou canst well supply,
Beyond all jewels to thy partner's eye.

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Openly gladsome, furtively when grave,
Affecting fears, without pretension brave,
Yes, more than man with his loud-vaunted might
So apt to keep his virtues all in sight,
Let pedants criticize, pourtray, despise,
Identify with folly what is wise—
Let gloomy fanatics esteem thy name
A term reproachful, and betray no shame;
As when, to crown the grossness of their sect,
In Him who used it they would scorn detect.
Woman, let others paint thee as they will,
Thou canst afford to laugh and mark them still.
Thou art great Shakspeare's *hero* without peer;
Methinks in silence thou may'st others hear.
Woman! oh, grant me thy approving smile,
Nothing then ever will my heart beguile;
Not the vile taunts of sophists in their school,
Not the base maxims of the world's proud rule;
The doubts of sceptics will seem groundless, vain;
Thy silent looks will faith itself sustain.
The heartless counsels of the coward hollow
Will seem a thing to curse, and not to follow.
Woman! but promise me a silent tear,
Nothing on earth I tremble at and fear;
For only let me feel thy loving breath,
Sweet is my life, and happy is my death.

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TO JANE MARY.

(AN IMITATION OF SHELLEY.)

REMEMBER thee, fair spirit!
Yes! though all else fade
That on earth did merit
Glorious to be made!
Like the bright type we honour when it is thy shade.

Daughter, wife, and mother,
Gracious in each part!
Who his grief can smother
That once knew thy heart,
Like a blest angel wing'd, that joy could aye impart?

In life when first begun,
No child more fair to see;
And when thy race was run,
Few to compare to thee,
Combining heaven and earth, divine humanity!

Of home what love so pure!
What strength of potent mind!
What courage to endure!
What grace so ready, kind!
What rare opposing virtues in thee we ever find!

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With thy contentment true
No restless wants can be,
With thy faith shown to view,
No weakness can agree;
Whate'er is soft and strong—we find it all in thee.

Soaring or at rest,
The unseen world is thine;
From what is last and best
Thy light does ever shine.
Would it may still reach others, and even kindle mine!

To see thy placid smile
In vain we look each day;
This darkness may beguile,
Our visions fade away.
Oh! mem'ry be our strength, and thou with us wilt stay.

Better than all meanings
Of most tuneful men,
Better than all gleanings
By immortal pen,
Thy looks to mortals wandering would be even then.

In the long night of ages
Each great soul does shine;
But where on earth are pages
Fit to show forth thine,
When thou didst kindle spirits, as once thou guidedst mine?

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No bird amidst the flowers,
No prudent honey-bee,
More gay to charm the bowers,
Or sweetness yield to me,
Than thou, so timid, wise, and still so fair to see.

Like a sprite deputed
To protect thy child,
A guardian angel suited
To recall the wild,
Thou didst pass through life, a star for us beguiled.

Like a woman only,
Thinking each day higher,
Up like the lark so lonely,
Teaching to aspire
Those who watch'd thee mounting to the skies still nigher.

Cheerful, still just at hand,
So meek, so gentle, free,
All hearts thou couldst command,
Diffusing inward glee
While teaching souls to love in tender mystery.

In sunshine like a flower
That blows in summer air,
In shades of woe a power
Creating Heaven where
Thou didst both heal and charm all that was wounded there.

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The schools of sages grave,
Most dulcet strains of song,
With all that man can save
From inward sense of wrong,
Still needed thy sweet looks their movement to prolong,

Teaching old or youthful
What is most sure and best,
Simple, grand, and truthful,
And like thy humble breast,
The way to Heaven's glory, man's eternal rest.

When hearts on music's wing
Are borne to the skies,
When solemn choirs sing,
More high thy speaking eyes
Did raise us often then what's earthly to despise.

Bright are the visions
Of thy higher sphere,
Beyond our best decisions,
For enjoyment near;
We only feel assured thou hast no more to fear.

Fled from this orb of sorrow,
Thy place 'midst stars above,
We know not where to borrow
Words to express our love
For thee, by faith exalted, soaring there above.

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A SURVIVOR.

When the nest's forsaken,
  Its feathers grow damp and cold;
When the tree's heart's taken,
  It fades, whether young or old;
When the mountain is dry,
  The brooks will no longer flow;
When she you loved must die,
  The joy of your home ends so.

As the bird's breast in spring
  Kept warm its mansion of clay,
As the trunk with gnarl'd ring
  Had leaves on a summer's day,
As blue hills fed the stream
  Which ran through the merry fields,
United life's a dream
  That bliss and perfection yields.

When that dream is over,
  Step by step each day you sink,
Though hope seems to hover,
  Perhaps to return, you think;
But downwards, lower still
  You pass to a clime of woe,
Struggling on vainly till
  It's all a mere blank below.

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Then no one likes to see
A house deserted and lone,
As if each fear'd to be
The same with happiness flown.
And young folk want a fold,
And sigh for a less dark lot,
And even they grow cold;
The past then is soon forgot,

All the rapture and fun,
All counsels sweet, and the friends
That cheer'd so like the sun,
While work with hope never ends.
Then things round you perish:
They fade and drop one by one;
There's none them to cherish,
So somehow they all are gone.

No light step and airy
Is heard any more on stairs,
No bright sylphan fairy
To rooms overhead repairs;
The garden once admired,
Ere its enchantment was fled,
Seems never to be tired
Crying the words, She is dead.

No thought that won't weary,
No hand left to trim the flowers;
Solitude's so dreary,
Where once you so loved the bowers!

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The stillness will there be
As if in a dungeon cell,
Thy friends left will blame thee;
In fact thou dost nothing well.

Perhaps but little space
Remains for thee still to live,
Time hastens on apace,
What then hast thou more to give,
Unless it be some tone
From the depths of nature wrung,
Like a bell heard to moan
More sad than was ever sung?

Some disappear in youth,
Some flourish yet through their prime,
And some struggle forsooth
Till they grow weary of time.
Yet still do not complain;
No sorrow has not its good,
No anguish is quite vain,
Though this is by few understood.

Blinded, the bird sings best;
The happy so little learn!
When all's gone, thou canst rest,
And rays from above discern.
Life for most is so sad!
Then why be free from sorrow?
With grief we are less bad;
Enough! Life has a morrow.

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While already relief
From this anguish deep and dry—
This all-consuming grief,
When no tears attend the sigh—
Can to this life belong,
Although not from trees and flowers;
'Tis from the holy song
Heard soft in the Vesper hours.

There with the simple flock,
At the sound you seem to soar;
As if was struck the rock,
Fast, hot, the tears flow once more.
O music and thy power!
What thought could never achieve
In the sweetest bower,
This gloom thou canst there relieve;

With the stream of your tears
Thus all the sweet past returns;
Each loved one then appears;
Your heart with drought no more burns.
It only feels the glow
Descending from Heaven's love,
With what its wings bestow
To waft you on there above.

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THE USE OF MISHAPS.

A CERTAIN swell, who loved his own dear ease,
Anxious himself and others too to please,
Enjoy'd the comforts of a Christmas home,
And little cared for those who hungry roam.
From time to time some few he would relieve,
Just that Christian he himself might believe.
Nothing seem'd wanting to his happy state;
Dame Fortune on his nod appear'd to wait.
What was there not to please the taste and sight?
Feasting by day, and music every night.
Presents of game in larders piled on high;
And all things absent that could raise a sigh.
When, lo! a servant in that happy hall
Feels sick one evening. This has stopp'd it all.

He who of life neglects the joys and mirth,
Beneath some wondrous star has had his birth.
I sing, of course, but in a human way,
Let others solemn look, and wiser say.
I love the sprightly, gamesome, full of glee;
That is the comrade and the friend for me.
Oh yes! how sweet of life each little pleasure!
When, like Jules Janin, you submit to measure!
The little joys of friendship and of fun,
The little pleasure of a summer's sun,

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The little joy of a bright holiday,
The springtide pleasures of the month of May,
The winter comfort of a cheerful home,
Whether within the house or out you roam,
The social circle round the blazing fire,
The hearing songs of which you never tire;
In short, the joys of private, happy men,
Contented, pleased with all things! aye, but then!
Yes, there's a "but" to qualify the whole,
And keep alive to watchfulness your soul;
For all this pleasure ever is exposed
To sudden ruin more than is supposed.
Therefore permit me now another view
To take of life, and what is needful too.
My gay, and hearty, jolly, pleasant friend,
Just now I sing with quite another end.
Chances, misfortunes, call them what you will,
May come to startle and to grieve you still.
To blame you for basking when the sun did shine
May be the task of others, but not mine.
The Roman poet set himself to show
The vanity of wishes here below.
I follow not that frothy, gloomy wake,
But I will try to view, and for your sake,
Some passes of our life untoward, dark,
And their advantages attentive mark.
I would not have you cast down like the sad;
Such tempers end in driving people mad;
But I will sing a little song quite wise,
Which from my throat may cause you some surprise.

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Nor for this purpose need I lead you through
More than one pass, its tendency to view;
For what is true of one is true of all;
And by this method we shall less appal
People who cannot like too long to hear
Of what most naturally causes fear.
I'll take this case which many may have known;
The good resulting I am sure you'll own.

So to return unto our swell at ease,
With nothing he thought near him to displease.
A servant thus, I said, was taken ill;
But this was no great matter said some still.
The others thought 'twas only a bad cold;
No, said the doctor, let the truth be told;
'Tis scarlet fever, a decided case.
Provide some chloride, bad air all to chase:
I tell you now, the case is most decided;
Let things against infection be provided.

'Twas evening, just as dinner was prepared,
That the news came which every bosom scared.
The doctor, resolute though kind, good man,
Tries to excuse and comfort all he can.
But there, a spectre, stands the hideous fact.
Each knows not where to turn, or how to act.
Break up, make bundles, hasten, quick disperse.
Would you behold us sicken? perhaps worse?
No eloquence was needed for the nonce;
All are quite ready to depart at once.

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Some are already fled upon the sly;
Others, arriving, turn their backs and fly.
The quickest heels will now proclaim the winner;
The daintiest guest is off before the dinner.
For self there's no one fears; 'tis all for others.
You know we all are such true Christian brothers!
Friendship for you obliges them to fly.
How could they feel for you were they to die?
Thucydides, the Florentine, De Foe,
Only just those around you seem to show.
Now all things grow confounded and get wrong,
A mortal crime becomes this harmless song.
Though here I grant there is a compensation
Which somewhat qualifies the lamentation.
Your laughing at them without blame can please;
It gives them right to hate you at their ease;
And so a little jollity 'midst sorrow
Prepares for you, at once to-day, to-morrow,
And for much longer than I like to say,
The loss of friends,—such is the price you pay.
Yet none I blame; I only want to laugh;
Your real satirist is worse by half;
Affecting to be one I own I am.
But what great harm when it is all a sham?
You who will with me laugh, whate'er you say,
Would be prepared to act the self-same way.
I wonder should I imitate you too?
Oh no! myself not knowing, say I. True,
This thought of mine is most unfortunate;
Most apt to cause a vain internal state.

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I pass it all by; it can concern none.
Digressing thus, the song will ne'er be done.
Thus, he who boasted of his happy home,
Has now, like others, through the streets to roam,
Cold, with no more prospect of the joys
For which so long his measures he employs.
An hour sufficed to strip him of his friends,
A servant ailing, and his comfort ends;
For 'tis not only he has lost a home;
Like the old wandering Jew, he has to roam.
His dearest friends, because he still will stay
Where others all are gone, and flown away,
Abhor his presence, 'gainst him shut their door;
No excommunication dire could more
Exclude him from the noble and the good,
From all society as understood.
The poor friend, had he still one, would laugh long,
Invite him in, and ask for a new song,
Would scorn the needless terror of the rest,
And say what God wills ever is the best;
But this forsaken wight had now no more
One who for him would have an open door.
So now, from living with his grander friends,
He finds where ceremonious kindness ends.
They fear to see him even in the street;
They hum and haw, and look both shock'd and sweet;
But stop they cannot, though to wish good day,
His clothes may spread contagion on the way.
In vain the doctor says they need not fear;
Pale grows their face if but of him they hear.

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Pass, and begone! they say with secret breath;
The rich fear thought more than the lowly death.

Now let us mark how things will oft disclose
Some purpose far beyond what we suppose;
Some strange coincidence, as people say,
Though that it's more, a few esteem it may.

This poor rich swell, now left without a shed,
In perfect ease to screen his selfish head,
Cross, angry, nervous, quarrelsome, and sad,
As if a little touch'd, if not stark-mad,
In order not to feel quite in the lurch,
When Sunday came resolved to go to church;
He could not hope to pray, you well may think,
But he opined his spirits could not sink
Much lower; and besides, where could he go?
So, through mere habit, he arranged it so.

His custom this, you see, for not so bad
As some, he always consolation had,
Finding himself with others thus employ'd,
Where charms of music also are enjoy'd;
He goes accordingly to Warwick-street,
Where aids from faith you're always sure to meet;
And so it proved for this bewilder'd wight;
To tell the whole, I'll sing with all my might.
The Gospel for the mass of that same day
Told how a great man travell'd far to pray

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Our Lord to cure his poor sick servant boy,
And His almighty graces to employ.
The preacher, from the sister isle, a man
To make you think of great St. Columban,
Possess'd that look, that action, simple, grand,
Which over human passions has command.
He praised that rich man for his charity,
And show'd how few like him would grieve to see
A servant sick, or with his person try
For him to gain a likely remedy.
He said, detachment in the rich exceeded
E'en resignation in the poor, who needed;
He said the consequence of constant ease
And comfort would infallibly displease
Heaven; for that consists in hearts of stone,
Deaf and insensible to poor men's moan.
Seated at ease, with every comfort round,
Men are so thoughtless, if not cruel found!
I fear for them, he said, I dread their end,
When all upon themselves and pride they spend.
Would they might put on paper with a pen
(The figures too, he said, were all down then
In other tablets) what they vainly paid
For that which them but fond and worldly made;
So that he ended, what for them is best,
Is something that contrives to spoil their rest,
To make them feel, what poverty has ever,
Want with good humour, perfect comfort never;
Pleasures should yield to what must grieve their eyes;
For them no hope without a sacrifice.

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He ceased; and though, with truth, it's not asserted
That any man was on the spot converted,
Still, on more hearts perhaps than I could tell
The simple words like dew from heaven fell.
Their rest is broken, comfort all is fled;
There is the sacrifice, of which 'twas said,
Without it all is dark, and full of fear,
By means of it, the peace of heaven near.
True, that the sacrifice has been extorted,
But perhaps designs have not been thwarted:
The hearts exulted, though the tongues were mute,
Leaving to others words that them would suit.
Glory to God on high, they cry, for all
The chances, woes, that mortal man befall!
Glory to Him for all the grief He sends,
With which He still our rude frail nature mends.
In truth, whatever words or thoughts we borrow,
The best and brightest things we owe to sorrow.
To grief we owe a care and love for others,
To grief exemption from the ease that smothers
All the pure, finer feelings of the heart,
All that to minds can poesy impart.
You'll laugh, perhaps, to hear my lame conclusion,
When I allude to such a wild effusion,
And say to grief we owe of life this view,
To grief the songs we now submit to you.

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THE LOWLY OBSCURE.

Pray tell me which you like the best,—
Our high life, or the common rest
Of men and women, undistinguish'd,
With all ambition vain extinguish'd?
Before I answer, tell to me,
Which would you rather hear and see,
A thrush, all brown, so sweet to sing,
Or jay, with gorgeous colour'd wing?
A pigeon, with its modest green,
Or hawk, that is but seldom seen?
A red-breast, with its eye that talks,
Or lone black crow, that solemn stalks?
A nightingale, that all esteem,
Or peacock, with its airs and scream?
The swallow, liking any roof,
Or magpie, keeping far aloof:
The one so pleased with poor thatch'd eaves,
Th' other chattering that deceives?
Which pleases best, and ever long,
Though all this I must not prolong,
Town sparrow with its merry tone,
Or raven dull, a croaker grown?
Green linnet dear to lads and lasses,
Or turkey, that in pride surpasses,

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Strutting and gobbling, nothing mild,
With twists and turns, to scare the child?
Then look at flowers,—which are best?
For which would you give up the rest?
Chrysanthemum, so stiff and stark,
Or violet sweet, though in the dark?
Tall showy poppies, causing sleep,
Or even death, to make you weep?
Fair roses, to no clime unknown,
Or bulb eccentric, rarest grown?
Hedge roses wild, so sweet and coy,
Clad in brown leaves, like corduroy?
Or the same flower, grafted high,
On straight, tall sticks, that grace defy?
Bright daisies, cowslips in the field,
Which all can such sweet pleasure yield,
Or some long stalks, scentless, silly,
Like your flaming orange lily?
Then if your choice agrees with mine,
You can my answer soon divine,
Kept to be utter'd in a song,
Through fear we should be tax'd with wrong.
I like the people; and pray why?
Because they feel the same as I.
I cannot say I've lived with kings,
But give me ways of these poor things!
Where there is nothing harsh and prickly,
While all the time affected sickly.
You like what's manly, honest, true?
Well, they will feel and speak like you.

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You hate all heroes with Ducis?
Like you they would not seem but be.
You hate false gravity and gloom?
You'll like their merry little room.
You fear the need of costly dowers?
The poor discard them, like the flowers,
Who leave their children earth and sun,
The dew that falls, and all is done:
No idle fears, enough for all,
And yet that fortune is not small.
You like of gracefulness the tact?
With them you'll find it, 'tis a fact.
You like intensity in love?
Then keep to them. Don't look above,
Whence chivalry has long been banish'd
Where all its visions long are vanish'd.
There are exceptions to all rules,
But no one always thinks of fools,
Who cannot just distinctions trace,
Or judge of character from face.
Of course we know in station high
Are simple loves which never die;
Poetic courtships, such as found
With lowly youth we see around;
The name of sweetheart may be rare,
But then the thing itself is there.
And instances I full well know,
To prove, at times, it can be so;
But oftener, methinks somehow,
'Tis more a stiff and formal bow,

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A project, interest, a mere spirit,
Or something we do not inherit,
Brought about by silly training,
Ever what is good restraining.
Soft beauty may be there with grace,
But there is what can that deface,
A coldness and a want of nature
Benumbing every act and feature,
Reserve uncall'd for, love to smother—
Trace of a proud and worldly mother,
In France who vainly thinks to shame
Those who, we own, are much to blame,
By calling them the half, no more,
Of what she will herself adore;
Though half of that which wounds the soul
Is surely better than the whole.
But leaving now what soars and stalks,
Back we must fly to lowly walks.
You like the sound of human voice:
When natural it can rejoice,
And make you lightsome as the day
As you pass lonely on your way.
Then listen to the merry sounds,
Half-song, with which the street abounds.
'Tis work-lads answering each other,
And vying with some unknown brother,
Shouting and piping, whistling still,
As you all know they ever will,
Now here, now there, unseen but heard
Near you, or distant like a bird.

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And making all the town so gay
Though it be not a holiday.
Yes; give me the gay lower sort,
And let me with them still consort!
There's even good within your "rough,"
With warm heart, by no means tough,
If you will only treat him right,
Not look like him "of gloomy sight."
But take them altogether now;
My friends they are, I must avow.
I will not sing of women fair;
Where can you find them if not there?
I will not sing of courage high;
How well they show it none deny.
But this I cannot pass in silence,
Or utter without stern defiance
Of those who think the merit small
When your attention I would call
To one great trait of those you know
Only as ignorant and low.
They are not sophists in their mind;
That they are poets you will find,
Their likes and their dislikes the same
As those of all who bear that name.
Alas! my friend, there's not a year
Arrives without fresh cause for fear
That we shall lose some other ray
That cheers and lights the Poet's way.
Civilization, that is new,
Proscribes things dear to me and you,

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From moss upon the thatch-roof'd cot,
To—stop, I only ask What not?
Yet all the while in dwellings low
Abide the feelings and the glow
Which keep alive the bard's true fire
While causing hearts to mount still higher.
I know that times are better now
In some things that we don't avow;
I know that prejudice of race
Has left no very deadly trace,
But only a faint honest sense
Of what is true without pretence.
I know that odious horrid pride,
Which would two lovers true divide,
Is hardly known in life around
Where the true human measure's found.
Convention is not all in all;
The high can sometimes court the small.
Ferocities in times of old
Are only now in stories told.
Mere feudal and patrician ways
Will yield, while what is human stays;
Though pride and prejudice still grow
Where gardeners would not have it so.
For honour false, prolific seed,
Is what some natures ever need.
Yet still we are not quite so free
From what is hated deep by me;
And higher circles still retain
Some thoughts which made them once so vain.

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Frequent the salons of the great,
And praised is what you deadly hate;
Deep scorn'd, or doubted, or ignored,
Malign'd, or laugh'd at, or deplored,
Is all the secret tender thought
Which Fancy to your bosom brought.
Let humble dwellings ope the door,
And there, as if in days of yore,
You find quite an Homeric grace,
The Muses with you face to face;
Such tales, such phrases, and such mirth
To which simplicity gives birth.
They still may want the outward charm,
With which the Poet words can arm,
When sending them with brightest dart
To reach and kindle every heart;
But there below is all the fire
Which genius true will most admire;
There you find hid the real stuff,
Though unperceived by foppish muff,
To feed and nourish all the things
That make your common mortals kings.
And pray, do you prefer, I ask,
The sophist's, sceptic's, rich man's task
Of chilling, checking, doubting still,
Denying, smothering as they will,
Contracting, freezing, analyzing,
With jargon that is quite surprising,
All that to common hearts is sweet,
All that for poetry is meet?

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The poor will hate, you'll say they're wrong,
What all must execrate in song.
They hate all silly pompous airs,
The rudeness which surpasses bears;
The stiffness, hardness, and the cold,
Which makes the young look like the old;
But to be brief, whate'er it be,
"Workhouse," or menials proud to see,
Or aught else that offends their sight,
Their fancy, feeling always right,
In secret they and I are brothers,
Though pray don't tell it loud to others.

But now proceed we to survey
The beauties of this lowly way.
What then is fairer than their youth,
In all whose eyes you see their truth?
Or what more apt to make you pause,
Though admiration it ne'er draws,
Than to see young men so contented,
Privations constant, not resented?
Nothing but gay good-humour'd chaff,
Or some new song to make you laugh.
When Sunday comes, so smart to see,
So full of sprightliness and glee:
What contrast greater can you find,
Than age with such a placid mind,
With face of not mere dignity,
But stamp'd with a divinity,

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Such as man's countenance can show
To vulgar greatness far below,
And the dull, cross, and grumbling sires,
Whom others' pleasure always tires?
Faces alone can tell the rest,
Proclaiming who are truly blest.
The low, in this, are like the flowers,
That they dislike the gloom which lours;
And though your memory you rack,
You never found a flower black.
A trap is property—no more,
You think that you possess a store,
But 'tis the store possesses you,
And keeps true riches from your view.
Possessing little, you are free,
The earth and sky your property;
But when you would engross it all,
Your own enjoyment is but small.
Besides, this path has Fancy's light,
Which makes it pleasing in our sight:
There's something in it I think higher
Than roads to which the rich aspire;
It seems, though level with the sod,
To lead men nearest unto God.
Its sweets, I grant, are not display'd,
But rather shelter'd in the shade;
Yet into them if thus you'll pry,
You'll come to think the same as I;
But with the thought don't run away,
That they who praise this humble way,

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Are safe to hate, and even scorn,
Those to a higher station born:
No, for their heads they do not trouble
With what appears an empty bubble.
The world is wide,—there's space for all,
For proud and lowly, great and small;
They like the homely, and the free,
But merit in the great they see
With high contentment, admiration,
As something glorious for their nation.
And even what some rich despise,
Finds an excuse before their eyes;
'Tis foolish, that is past debate,
But downright vice alone they hate.
They have a tact to see and know
What may beneath a surface grow;
And if there be a germ of good,
By them 'tis felt and understood.
They like the violet in the shade,
But envious they are not made
By the gaudy, pompous colours,
That suit your rich exclusive bowers.
Though they so love the primrose pale,
They can admire the peacock's tail;
And though they dwell in humble hut,
They watch with smiles the turkey's strut.
Chrysanthemum may stand and stare,
And they will also think it fair;
They cannot rival such attire,
But still they can it well admire:

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So when we praise the common masses,
We wage no war with other classes;
There find we men, and women too,
Live like the flow'rets in your view.
No daisy, with its simple frock,
The piony is heard to mock;
No violet, fragrant in the shade,
Will seek to be a sunflower made.
'Tis true that He who decks the sky,
The charm of blue will oft deny.
To flowers chiefly of the field
That tone celestial He will yield;
As if on blossoms even low
He would His choicest grace bestow.
But although clad like heaven thus,
They wear blue humbly without fuss,
While gardens have their red and yellow,
To which some think there is no fellow.
Well, thus each beauty has its haunts,
But never do we hear keen taunts
Directed at some neighbour flower;
And never see we petals lour,
Because the garden, not the field,
Its proper scene of life can yield.
'Tis thus that we too ought to see
The contrasts of humanity.
In field or garden all should be
Like one sweet loving family.
And sooth to judge by class, not man,
Shows eyes but for a narrow span.

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The lowly, if transplanted high,
Might stiff and haughty all defy;
The great, if lowly they were made,
Might catch the perfume of the shade.
Concluding, then, sweet nature's law
Observed by the obscure I saw;
And so my love expansive ran,
To hail and greet the common man:
No taste more harmless or more true,
I wish it heartily to you!

AN ELEGY,

WRITTEN AFTER THE FUNERAL OF CARDINAL WISEMAN, FIRST ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER.

'Tis done, and issue from St. Mary's aisle
The pensive crowds whose looks bespeak a sigh;
Tall black-draped horses paw the ground the while,
Such as attend the mighty when they die.
Within was heard the solemn requiem mass
For a great Prince and glorious Pontiff's soul,
And the long file of mitred Fathers pass,
Clad in their copes and bright embroider'd stole.
Entranced were many with that potent song;
The thrill still felt almost suspended breath;
Nothing more grand or tearful could belong
To human greatness when laid low by death.

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The walls with some heraldic blazons hung,
The scarlet hat that on the coffin lay,
The absolutions chanted, four times sung,
Proclaim'd the Prince who now had pass'd away,
Prince of the church and shepherd of the flock.
Kings sent their envoys, to such grandeur due,
While symbols pointing to the mystic Rock
Told of the twofold greatness in your view.
Yet if alone this pageantry were found,
Some might have thought these honours could be vain,
August, but yielding never certain ground
Their hopes for souls departed to sustain.
But more than pageantry was granted here,
More than the hallow'd rites for those who die,
More than the tribute of a grateful tear,
More than the homage of all grandeur high.
For lo! a multitude awaits you now,
From all ranks drawn, though most of low degree,
To whom in secret with your heart you bow,
When on their foreheads all their souls you see.
Silent, respectful, pressing through the streets,
The vast assembled crowds that line the way
Evince emotions unlike all deceits,
Which are the homage that the worldly pay.
Seven miles of faces, showing each a mind
Impress'd with reverence and awe and love—
Is it on earth you such a vision find?
It might be thought reserved for heaven above.

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Oh! England, noble, glorious land and free,
Aye, spurning those who knowingly act wrong,
Thy holy, great, and ancient heart I see,
And will proclaim it with a simple song.
The pomp of riches and the proofs of power
Like a slight dream now pass and disappear;
A higher theme must haunt you from this hour,
To God and angels showing London dear.
How few the proud, indifferent, and vain
Compared with youth of labour thus imbued!
On frigid regions they inflict a stain,
But are not found in this vast multitude.
Greatness is not when kings give titles grand,
Nor yet when pontiffs chant the holy prayer,
'Tis when the people simply understand
That they have found the stamp of goodness there.
And then, reciprocally gifts so high
Act on the crowd that watches to admire;
To all thus drawn who then approach them nigh,
They yield a light communicating fire.
Thus slowly passing, kindling as it moves
The souls of those who catch what it reveals,
The long procession light unearthly proves,
Which over minds that will receive it steals.
Lo a great Priest! methinks I hear the cry,
Re-echoed from the long and close-press'd rows
Of thousands now enabled to descry
The mystic truth that instinct can disclose.

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For instinct, conscience, common homely sense
  Can effect wonders more than man conceives,
When wearied with the triumphs of pretence
  He sees how often each high gift deceives.

But now the city's lingering suburbs cease;
  You breathe of fields and new-plough'd soil the air;
The sudden change is felt like a release
  From what your nature's freshness did impair;
You see the verdure with a landscape vast,
  And still the file of grandeur rolls along;
The tombs you reach, the chosen spot at last,
  And hark! again, a burst of holy song!
The shades of night began to rise around;
  In deep'ning gloom the vale took leave of day;
Unnumber'd tapers shone upon the ground,
  Where the lost vesture of that spirit lay.
Evening's soft breeze appear'd not to disturb
  Their burning thus; the crowds, at distance kept,
To catch the words would each the other curb,
  While some responded, some in secret wept.
No other sound ascended through the air
  To interrupt that stillness so profound;
You only heard far off the voice of prayer
  Which died as wafted to more distant ground.
Time can of course dispel most mem'ries old;
  Distractions to efface them have the power;
But never the impression can be told,
  Of BENEDICTUS chanted at that hour.

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Hence let's away, and with the crowd retire,
In silence hast'ning from the hallow'd ground;
'Tis memory that henceforth can inspire
Those who to glory true the way have found.

AN ARREST.

My pal, hast been in prison? Nay, don't stare;
Offence not meant: the question is quite fair.
But were you ever march'd along the street,
Gazed on, and pointed at by those you meet?
Well, I have been; you need not ask how long;
For that might spoil the interest of my song
Just at the outset, when I want attention
To every item I shall have to mention.
It was in summer; an Ausonian sky
Shed its soft tints on many a palace high.
Bologna was the scene of my sad fate.
But do not ask, for I've forgot the date:
I only know the times were rather troubled,
And those who travell'd found their perils doubled.
Two short hours only had we enter'd there,
Gazing on all things ancient, and yet fair,
As we roll'd on through streets and garden bowers,
Longing to see the famous leaning towers.
I felt an anxious, quite ecstatic joy;
For sketching would that evening whole employ.

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My friends, I left them resting in the Inn—
Forth I lone sallied, labours to begin.
Come to the gates, intending to pass through,
I hasten'd, whistling, to obtain a view
Of the old towers, seen from paths without,
When, lo! I heard a grim and surly shout.
"Ho, stop, there!" cried an old and angry voice;
A soldier rushing at me left no choice:
So needs must I approach the aged sire,
Already darting at me looks of ire.
"Your passport! Show it instantly, young man:
Then, forwards, pass; and hasten as you can."
"Passport! I've none." "What ho, there! guard, above!"
Down flew three Germans,—as when harmless dove
Attracts the notice of some cruel hawk.
Here for the present ended was my walk.
"And so you thought to leave, unnoticed, free,"
Cried the old guardian, looking fierce at me.
I laugh'd aloud, of innocence quite sure;
I little thought what I should soon endure.
Germans, you know, are never in a hurry;
So the old man (which did me somewhat flurry)
Began quite slowly, with deliberation,
To write about me, asking me my nation.
I sketch'd him as he wrote, which vex'd him more;
But to give vent to fury he forbore.
For when a cat has fairly caught a mouse,
She cares no longer on him much to souse;

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Besides, when vengeance is quite safe and sure,
A little more you always can endure:
So he went on to write, and look'd quite cool;
To do his duty was his only rule.
Then with a seal, as large as half a plate,
He stamp'd the paper, which contain'd my fate.
Handing it to the soldiers, bade them march;
Ere I could wink we had repass'd the arch:
One walk'd behind, the others at each side.
I thought I'd talk to them; they told me 'bide
To speak anon when brought before the judge;
So mute and guarded thus I had to trudge.
The streets were long, and fully throng'd that day;
Some fair ones seem'd my story all to say:
Pity, I swear, was beaming from their eyes;
The men indifferent, yet show'd surprise.
For some would whisper, stop, and again look
To see beneath my arm a sketching-book,
While all the ladies really look'd sad,
As if they thought I could not be quite bad;
The distance was so great, I had full space
To make my observations on each face.
But always thus our fate begins and ends,
Known or unknown, women are our friends.
At length, arrived at some grim, solemn pile,
We pass'd through many doors, to rest awhile
Within a dark vault, where I found a store
Of captives like myself, endanger'd more:
For some were sobbing loud, and others dumb.
Beyond, in further halls, I heard a hum

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Of gruff, loud voices, asking questions fell,
While others plaintive seem'd the whole to tell,
Which had consign'd them to this darkness thick.
I then began to feel a little sick.
For only think! Suppose there be done wrong,
And they should my captivity prolong!
What a quick contrast from the beams of day,
To be engulf'd where toads alone would stay!
At length some light stream'd down from overhead,
From audience-chamber, whither each was led.
Be heard before me an aged prisoner must;
He wrung his hands, and seem'd not much to trust
The polish'd men, who seem'd so very cool,
While judging all things by their German rule.
The silly wretch was then led far from me;
For time had now enabled me to see
Somewhat within that formidable gloom,
Enough to give your fancy more of room.
But then comes my turn, when the tragic ends;
For all I heard was how to make amends
Instant to me for their subaltern's error:
The thing being now deprived of all its terror,
Said the officials, in whose keeping lay
The passport, taken from us that same day,
As we first enter'd old Bologna's gate;
So to be freed at once was then my fate.
It is not difficult to jest and sneer
At simple incidents, when never near,

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To him who hears of them in such a song;
But let him know an hour appeareth long,
To those whose things are going rather wrong;
'Tis well but for a moment to have known
What's felt by others, when unheard they moan.

IN A VALENTINE,

WITH A LANDSCAPE.

WITHIN a wood and circled by thick shade
You see a nook, I know not how long made,
By clearing branches twined above the spot
Letting the sun shine on the grassy plot,
Beneath a rock where fond young people meet'
To have a little chat, and feel how sweet
It is to hear the birds there ever singing,
With busy bees their way to blue-bells winging,
And nothing to endanger though 'twere dark,
And Snap that's an alarmist, 'gins to bark.
But why go on? The whole is drawn above,
Its name half taken from their own theme—Love.
The picture needs no verses, as you trace
The shelter'd beauties of the tranquil place,
The bench, the rock, the sweet wild flowers round—
You seem to breathe the fragrant air from ground
Perfumed with violets, bushes white with May,
Where even daisies somewhat have to say,

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While still in silence some will rather sit,
Not caring much like others to show wit.
And sooth I think at times, I know not why,
Enough of speech is furnish'd by the sky.
What study like it? Only look up there,
How much to soothe and to instruct the fair!
At sylphs I point not in the regions high,
As if you could their form therein descry;
But thrown 'midst gnomes, these demons of the earth,
Who to all teasing or worse thoughts give birth,
I do maintain, the sky without mistake
Seems to shine lovely, chiefly for Love's sake.
What grace reflected in that floating cloud,
How little in accordance with the proud,
Who for themselves their grandeur would display,
And grateful homage to no other pay!
And yet for all this eloquence, though mute,
Some gentle air with words perhaps might suit.
The lark that sings so merrily above,
The thrush beside us, silence would reprove,
If constant, amidst all this pleasantness,
Without one fancy in poetic dress.
Then let me sing, though what's unheard I praise,
Condemning thus the music of my lays.
Skies then can charm, and can instruct as well,
But light-hung leaves have also things to tell.
The earth itself, each day refresh'd with dew,
Teaches the lessons that we early knew.
Then see the flowers, starry at your feet,
Yet what can be more humble and more sweet?

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Each, though so fair, is modest, and as coy,
As any damsel breathing simple joy.
The odorous winds that fan your temples there,
Surpass all perfume that the haughty wear.
I grant that thorns bristle in the shade,
But life itself is sweet with sorrows made.
Who can imbibe the brightness of this hour
If nothing dark had ever cross'd his bower?
So that in all things present to us here
We have an emblem showing contrasts near.
The skies themselves are often overcast,—
Ah, well-a-day! how often in the past
Have most true lovers learn'd to taste some sorrow,
Wept, but hoped still, and trusted in the morrow!
But present joys, and this is felt by all,
Are more augmented when a darksome pall
Is thrown aside to let us love and smile,
Strong, yet heart-yielding, tender without guile.
You know the line upon a certain rose,
"As without thorns it without fragrance grows[1]."
You love the wall-flowers that perfume the ground,
Well, 'tis in broken ruins they are found.
How strange to catch these notes of sadness here,
The birds rejoicing and such beauty near!
But thus it is with life in all its charm,
And plaintive tones when heard do no one harm.
Well, let us look in silence, and admire;
Beauty like this the mind can never tire.

[1] Vict. Hugo.

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At morn how pure the pale and distant blue,
Showing that love should ever still be new!
At noon how warm, how bright, and cheerful all,
The same sun shining on the great and small!
At eve descending through those golden mists,
It seems but veiling brightness that exists,
Awaiting those to God and nature true
Who baseness, coldness, treachery, ne'er knew—
Who feel the depth mysterious of that Will
Immense, almighty, and yet placid still.
Then later, when that light of fading green,
The day's last envoy, leaves no object seen
Distinctly, though the moon so crescent pale
Will rise as if to hear the lover's tale,
Whisper'd through foliage black, and with a sound
Like music close to us on fairy ground—
Oh! then the earth, by those who feel, is spurn'd
While eyes are only on each other turn'd;
And then that star so bright in evening skies
Directs to bliss and love that never dies.

Like ants, our scenes of love are in the sky,
For love 'tis there that we and they must fly,
Leaving below the earth and all its toil,
Whose interests would our love's wings only soil.
When love is over we may justly sigh,
For then like them in clouds we sink and die.

Well, these are words that shun the public way;
But here they rise to lips, and lingering stay,
Falling like diamond dew upon the flowers,
Emblazon'd upon leaves within these bowers.

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Let love, pure love, be bliss that's call'd ideal,
I'll bring you proof that it is also real.
For eyes and lips can stop the flight of time,
As if eternal were their present clime.
Is aught more positive than that effect?
And this result you always may expect.
What is the hour? A day already fled!
You see the truth then only has been said.
When joys are with us, time has pass'd away,
'Tis only grief that causes it to stay.
Keep up your pecker, then, to use the phrase
Which suits so well these sprightly, spring-tide days.
Let joys and frolic haunt our humble bowers,
And life no more will then be mark'd by hours.
Already 'tis eternity we feel;
What else could Time's own end itself reveal?
But love alone can such bright joys impart:
Let love, that drop divine, then tinge your heart,
Love for him left to sit beside you near,
Love for those gone, for whom you hide a tear.
The heart is wider than what meets your view,
Nothing for it is gone, or past, or new;
It is elastic; so it may be bent;
When it expands no more its life is spent.
In one vast whole its fond affections grow.
Though all was given, still you can bestow
That love, whose centre, infinitely high,
Descends, to fill us, even ere we die,
To pass away from limits that confined
The vast expansive graces of the mind,

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And soar above, immortal lovers free,
Of each, of all, throughout eternity!
But now, most likely, (what I own is dear,)
Reproof like this that follows I shall hear,—
Enough; come, cease, I hate such misty strains;
They sound to me like some one that complains.
What tedious stuff is all thy Valentine,
Which others might no doubt think vastly fine.
Good gracious me! Indeed, it's grown quite late,
How could you so go on to sing and prate?
Well, if you catch me here again, I think
My spirits surely to my shoes will sink.
Good night, my plaintive, artful, bird-like friend;
I thought your chirping never was to end.
Still, don't look sad; you know my constant way?
Homewards, alone, you yet may cheerful stray.
One solo short at parting hear from me,
Measure not love by what you hear and see:
Others of songs and praise may have a store;
With less professions I can love thee more.

FERRARA.

Ferrara! What sweet music in that name!
How grand its castle, with its ancient fame!
Arrived once there, I have no words to say,
How love for song idealized that day.

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Perhaps it was mere fancy in a boy,
For others see it, and yet feel no joy,
Such as then wing'd my feet to all explore:
Your tourist stops ten minutes, and no more;
For now are roads of rail on which to fly;
Earth's more agreeable, you can't deny.
But Tasso's spectre kindled in my soul
A passion which no reason could control.
Companionless, while straying all around,
I felt that here I trod romantic ground;
There's something, too, in that Italian light,
Which casts enchantment over what's in sight:
The age of prose at least had fled for me,
I seem'd to breathe the air of chivalry.
An aged signor seeing me sit down
To sketch that castle, of such old renown,
Came and stood by me, watching how I drew
Objects familiar, that to me were new.
Years have roll'd by; but never has his face
Pass'd from my memory,—such loving grace
Shone in his eyes, as calmly he survey'd
All the rough lines which on the spot I made.
Benignant sire! kindly he began
To chat and smile, as only goodness can.
Then he would lead me elsewhere, till I saw
Some other objects that I ought to draw;
For there are cloisters, palaces, all old,
With gardens terraced, more than can be told.
Then he would have me breakfast in his house;
He talk'd of daughters; I was like a mouse,

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Afraid to find myself where some might stare,
Perhaps, too, think I had no business there.
Years have roll'd on; but I see him still,—
Each look, each movement showing his kind will
To please and serve a stranger, no great things,
But one to whom a word unlock'd pure springs,—
The word Jerusalem is thus, you see,
A source within his heart of mystery.
The knight look'd pleased, on having at his side
One who he thought detested Paynim pride;
For some Italian breasts still felt the glow
Of nobler men in ages long ago.
Such memories by others are thought small,
And yet for tenderness surpassing all
That later life presenteth to the mind,
They seem to furnish what you cannot find
In formal bonds, with men much longer known,
Whom any thing but chance has made your own.
True, 'twas a friendship lasting but an hour,
Yet who can tell its destiny or power?
Perhaps in starry sphere again we meet;
Perhaps each other we shall one day greet.
What! my young friend, and are you here at last?
No stranger now, the gates of death thus past;
Ferrara saw us on a summer's day
For one short moment, then you pass'd away:
Now here we meet to live eternal friends,
Where Time with all its separations ends.

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ANTI-LUCRETIUS.

THE famed Poet of old, when bent to disprove
The bonds which connect us with heav'n above,
Invoked as his Muse the sweet goddess Pleasure,
Intending by senses all things to measure;
Though we, who an opposite end have in view,
Might pleasure appeal to, and follow her too:
By "the wound that's eternal" wholly subdued,
While "the nature of things" is here likewise view'd;
Since pleasure that's real you never can find,
Unless when our nature and truth are combined.
He had tedious dull error still to sustain;
While we have the cause of bright truth to maintain:
Then how much more justly might we call on joy,
To charm and to aid us, while facts we employ
In showing the causes which lead men astray
From the flowery, rational, sanctified way
Of faith above nature, exalted for ever,
To lead us to bliss, which perishes never?
How strange that so many our faith will deny!
"Pray give us," asks some one, "a plain reason why."

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There's nothing much clearer, can sooner be told,
'Tis now just the same as in ages of old.
And the causes ignoble require a verse
Of all that sounds solemn but just the reverse;
For here in this dull song I will not include
What may be combined e'en with high rectitude,
The doubt which springs up from desire to pry
Beneath the far depths of some great mystery;
For this mostly ends in the will that is right,
To wait with the wise till mortality's night
Will have pass'd after death for ever away,
And yielded to beams of the ne'er-ending day.
If the poet of Rome was praised for his song,
Spoil'd by the doubts which to sceptics belong,
I see no great harm while them we defy,
If singing we teach why our faith they deny.

There are some then, perhaps, whom no one should blame,
Their fault is so closely allied to their shame,
'Tis sickness quite real, or morbid weak sense,
Which throws itself out thus in idle pretence.
They sigh and they babble; their doubts are so sad!
But never these tender souls class with the bad.
Perhaps quite unversed in the Catholic schools,
They misjudge of Scripture, left without rules,
Whereby the whole sense of the true Christian creed
Is shown with philosophy strictly agreed.
So deeming it cruel, unjust, merely stern,
They cannot its certainty clearly discern.

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Compassion in such cases is but their due ;
Oh, let it flow gently from me and from you!
But pride, though still latent in depths of the heart,
Envenoms in others the enemy's dart.
They think themselves then to be marvellous clever,
So their thoughts from other men's needs must they sever ;
Then they take to some misty German new books,
On which hangs their faith as on so many hooks.
I know not if every one be like unto me ;
But sooth here of words only millions I see.
And what words! for men of proud science will call
All things by some sounds that must nature appal.
Like poor Karr in his garden, hear them but speak
Of flowers, in jargon of barbarous Greek ;
Plants you and I name by such tender sweet sounds,
Are Mesocarps, Omphalodes, Glumes, Anthodowns.
Pray are you contented? or shall I proceed?
You'd be wrong to feel stinted if more you should need ;
For one man of science still after another
Is sure to reverse what was taught by your mother.
But youth cannot always be sponsors to flowers,
So names that are hideous will startle their bowers,
Since dull pedants still, as in ages of yore,
Can but coin ugly terms and seldom do more.
Then why should we wonder at all their parade,
When God and His laws they would cast into shade?
Philosophy rational now is their boast,
And of names all Teutonic they get a vast host.

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But pray never ask me to break my poor jaws
With words that to me sound as sharpening saws;
That remind me of one boy who said to another
(Who sung pretty fairly), "Don't go on and bother;"
For here his whole phrase would be just I avow,
Abruptly exclaiming, "Stop that dirty row."
Hark Grün, Froebel, Wagner, Blasche, Moleschott, and Krause,
With Biedermann—ain't it like crows with their caws?
And when you hear Comte aping Germans in French,
From our lad's vulgar phrase you cannot retrench;
For if Feuerbach is but "a row" and a noise,
Littré, Lanfrey, and Renan splash "dirt" that annoys;
And "dirt" in low spirits, the worst kind of all,
Beware lest on you or on yours it should fall.
There, now; what low and contemptible thinking!
Their only reply is significant winking.
Poor we're of the many, but they're of the few;
'Tis what they suspected, or all the while knew.
To what a low story our minds must belong,
When thinking such things to comprise in a song!
Mere ignorance gross must for us have great charms,
Since for it thus assail'd we don all our arms.
Ig*nor*antifying, ig*nor*antified,
That *we* are most ignorant can't be denied.

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The vulgar alone could thus jest and complain!
And this is sufficient to prove us but vain.
For nothing more vulgar to their sadden'd eyes
Than merriment taking them so by surprise,
While they try to convince us all others are wrong
But those to whom proudly they wish to belong.
All language too used since the world first began,
Has now to be changed for the civilized man;
He proscribes all the words that each one well knows,
From which he must purge all your verses and prose;
Or words he may leave you like dust for your eyes,
To hinder your seeing where sophism lies;
While his thoughts intermediate and deeply conceal'd,
Undermine the whole structure you think reveal'd.
But stript of that comment devised by his brain,
The true plain honest sentence he deems to be vain.
So the commonest phrase the world used all o'er,
Will for him have no meaning or true justice more.
What is truth? What is error? What is God, or the soul?
Respond with mankind, and he laughs at the whole.
Nay when words are employ'd as long sanction'd by use,
He says we've no reasons, but only abuse.
Now Englishmen even are caught in the snares
Of those who call wisest just him who most dares.
If read they *must* now all to youth that is told,
They'll cry "outworn creeds, myths, and dogmas old."

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If at Munchheim with doctors they pass but an hour,
'Tis vulgar to like the Pope's temporal power.
For how could they be so distinguish'd and clever,
If to see more than others they did not endeavour?
As for censuring aught by letter Encyclic,
Deep delicate thinkers they say it must make sick.
For what would become of the nations if they
Had not liberty all things with freedom to say?
And though what's condemn'd may be false and absurd,
'Tis they quite alone who've a right to be heard.
Then as for decisions on points of belief,
They think it quite novel and feel a relief.
"Full of grace," said the angel in Scripture as found;
"Immaculate" argues what's new and unsound.
Perhaps it was wrong from Rome first to sever,
But now is the Pope become far worse than ever.
It skills not what Councils determined of old,
You must judge by what now in bookshops is sold;
Anonymous writings to new Reviews sent,
Are more to the point than decisions of Trent.
In brief, things now said by unauthorized fools,
For eternal disunion are found the best tools.
The Pagans thought Christians St. Peter adored;
They would not say we such an idol implored,
Who will not admit that his voice should be heard,
When from evil material men should be deterr'd.
To trench upon politics too's an abuse
Self-evident, palpable to the obtuse.

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St. Paul was a Tory respecting the king;
Successors of Peter repeat the same thing.
But all this is grasping at more than belongs
To the Church, which thick darkness and error prolongs,—
Intolerance—Persecute! all that we hate,
And that Rome likes them both is now past debate.
They start from a rule to which good men agree,
And then they say, Rome contradicts us, you see.
Explanations are scouted as merely pretence,
For what they seek chiefly is ground of offence.
With feelings like these how can faith long remain,
When pride the poor head makes so troubled and vain?
Then what too in fact are these wonderful books?
They can't live with others; and ugly that looks.
If to Hegel and such plants you give up the ground,
For Bossuet, Leibnitz, no room can be found.
When Scherer and critics of that class you choose,
Then Malebranche, and Pascal, and Butler you lose,
Who all held of reason the formula chief,
From which at no moment they'd give you relief;
That all at the same time and in the same sense,
Relation existing the same, no pretence
Can justly be found to affirm and deny
The same thing, however intently you pry.
But good gracious me! only think of the choice,
Which makes your ears closed to the great ancient voice!

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Dilemma most sad, for which few are prepared
Who for reason's own sake would its organs have spared.
If now in some grand, lovely garden's bright pale,
Some new-comer deem'd all its sweet roses stale,
Its violets, wall-flowers, and stately old yew;
If these were neglected for exotics new,
All novel but vapid, so colourless, weak,
Such a gardener, I believe, there's no one would seek.
We should say he did all to please his own will;
But old wholesome beauties—we'd cling to them still.
'Tis so in the far brighter garden of souls;
Its standards we only prize more as time rolls.
And when we find sciolists turn off their eyes
From what taste delights in, we feel no surprise.
The beans are in flower, I pray you to note,
So be on your guard when on such men you'd dote [1].
But always some few are detected and found
Who know not the value of rich, fruitful ground.
Precisely in this way the Sophists now act;
Of strong, joyful genius, they have not the tact.
Our old worthies all were fast sound asleep;
'Tis only ten years since we saw the dawn peep.
E'en Wordsworth himself was involved in the night,
Oh! if he lived now, what would be his fright?

[1] "Cum faba florescit,
Stultorum copia crescit."

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For each year now hastens the brightness of day;
All things of the past must soon fly away.
Our solid, grave writers besides they ignore,
Such as guided wise men in ages of yore,
Such as satisfied heads both clear and profound,
And not like the dandies in these regions found;
A Will o' the Wisp they just take for a star,
And, sinking and floundering, follow it far,
Thus wandering over the marsh and the waste,
Now up to their necks quite, then running in haste,
Heedless of blunders, knowing only the fear
Lest on roads used by neighbours they once should appear;
Though when they have follow'd up all their new rules,
Common sense will but style them strange, clever fools.
For what greater folly can ever be shown,
Than wisdom of ages to doubt or disown?
To take all for granted, whatever you say,
Such now is the new nineteenth century way,
Pretending that science has shiver'd the base
Of religion, which formerly cheer'd our whole race.
That the men of past times were happy, serene,
Is what to deny, sooth, they do not now mean.
But that both we can't follow, true logic and them,
Is what they suggest by significant "*hem.*"
Yes, they could have peace, they had hope, at their death,
But this is beyond those who now here draw breath.

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Then some talk of an advent essential deem'd now,
Their thoughts half express'd by a darksome knit brow;
To hear these you'd think all their hopes must lie there,
As if all the past was quite worn out and bare.
Whilst those more advanced on this sceptical way
Think useless all efforts to find a sure stay;
Thus taking for granted an error quite pure,
When supposing that faith is no longer so sure,
That man is no longer the same as of old,
And that truth of the soul remains to be told;
That Austin and Ambrose, and all the whole school
Of sages, in their time quite err'd in their rule;
And that those who acknowledge this fact, though sad,
Are the sole living men not stupid or mad.
Oh then what gross ignorance all this displays
To the mind of a scholar who all time surveys,
Well knowing that surfaces, howe'er they change,
Affect not of principles moral the range;
That mankind are now, as in days of St. Paul,
Dependent on faith for their wisdom and all;
That, though girdles of iron encompass the earth,
And whether men choose ways of sadness or mirth,
The order of living for them is the same
As when it appear'd so unknowing and tame,
And that still one thing which is constant and sure,
Is Catholic wisdom, which aye must endure!

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[redacted] it all this to sophists is obsolete stuff,
[redacted] heir will is decided, and that seems enough.
[redacted] like moths, on they fly in their foolish career,
[redacted] 'till death yields his touch, and they all disappear.
[redacted] When writers like these some for sages select,
[redacted] True faith from them then we've no right to expect;
[redacted] Though keeping a middle way still through the bog,
[redacted] Not wishing, like Germans, to go the whole hog.

Then others, and many, are of coarse, harder clay,
Who keep clear of all mists and take a broad way.
Deep selfishness reigning in their minds supreme,
They scarcely then care much what other men deem
Their pleasures and habits, their tastes or their whim,
Provided their own scorn flows up to the brim.
Now such men must doubt, it is ever their way;—
That nothing is certain is all they will say.
If of talents amerced, they grossly will think
Their safest way ever is downwards to sink
To the level of beasts below, in the chain
Which connects all that form the animal reign.
The gorilla, they're told now, is of their kin;
They chuckle to hear it, and care not a pin.
If high goods of nature to them have been given,
To different measures of course they are driven;
Then they would show a Voltairian complexion,
Then satire and wit are what they would live on.

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To Greece and to Rome others loudly appeal,
Not knowing of either, perhaps, a great deal.
To Pagans they think that we Christians did owe
The whole that we prize much, and all that we know.
As for Catholic realms both of old and to-day,
They hold them inferior in every way.
But what would they think, pray, or what language borrow,
Just if in "The Times" it was stated to-morrow
That in some Popish land, of which they complain,
Suppose France, or Bavaria, Portugal, Spain,
A Scipio real was now drawing breath,
And on such a day had put coolly to death,
Not through harsh, cruel laws calling schism a pest,
But because all deem'd youth to be purest and best,
Just seven young maidens and seven young men,
While all thought success was assured to them then?
Sooth what they might think then, or what they might say,
We cannot determine, so quick is their way
To shirk a fair question, and scorn to pause
When they feel that towards faith an argument draws.
But this is most logical—to wise men most clear—
From pagan renown Christians have not to fear;
Though pedantry, arm'd with four or five names,
To our faith most ungrateful, forgets and defames.

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And pray what is pedantry blinding them then,
But pride in a new form misleading the men?
But now this old learning is not much esteem'd;
By many too Christian by half being deem'd.
There's too much of agreement with all the new law
For them from such writings contentment to draw.
So to science quite pure these sages will turn,
And with high ardent zeal, their heads will soon burn
To find out, explain, or invent some great things
In physics which leave in the conscience no stings.
They put up high shelves, and they fill them too all
With classified specimens both great and small;
Preadamite sticks, and perhaps older stones,
Or antediluvian though still doubtful bones,
Or pottery pick'd up from under the Nile,
With conclusions to make all keener men smile.
With essence divine they seek fellowship now,
To be alchemized, free quite of space, is their vow.
The freaks of dull sadness to them seem sublime,
Engulf'd all the deeper while thinking they climb.
Identity, that is their doctrinal way;
That different things are the same they all say.
There's no contradiction in logic for them;
Metaphysics show nought derived from a stem
Of causes; for causeless effects in succession
Are all they admit of with endless digression.
To regulate Nature's sublime wondrous play,
They think that no personal master need stay.

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Though wheels within wheels are combined and
precise,
Though a jerk could disjoint, stop all in a trice,
Prevent planets moving in orbs of their own,
Spoil equilibriums impossible grown;
Envelope the earth with the vast ocean's tide,
Or swallow up mankind all through rents in its side,
They think the machine self-created could last,
Eternal, as still from eternity past.
Then leaving mechanics for things still more
strange,
Through morals, like simpletons, onwards they
range.
Neither evil nor good, nor falsehood nor truth,
Nor God nor the soul would they leave to a youth,
Unless it be something that's quite abstract grown,
In nature's soul believing, but not in their own.
Such sages, say poets, are not even men;
Do you ask with Lamartine what are they then?
Mere beings apart and to contradict made,
Expressly to form intellectual shade,
Whereby the bright visions of light may appear
More glorious contrasted with such darkness near.
Though God made them not—the thought is absurd,
But the meaning of this deserves to be heard;
For to God he would send them to gain a new
sight,
While deploring their present mysterious night.
But poets they scoff at—the silly vain men,
And all the more sages they think themselves then.

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So they form collections, each in his way,
Still asking themselves what the Christians will say?
When all this vast treasury then has been bought,
Great Moses they're quite sure to find was in fault.
They think it was meant he should tell us the whole
Contain'd in the Infinite, God's endless scroll,
When first His infinity rose and began,
And not what's confined to the finite and man.
As if Infinite God could have had a beginning,
As if by such thoughts a true fame they were winning,
As if infinite past, the future as well
It were possible thus to express and to tell!
So when some new traces are brought to their view
Of things left untold, they deem all is untrue,
All that he tells us when commission'd so high,
The needful instruction alone to supply.
They rave and they finger and make such a pother,
Urging and blaming and praising each other,
While thinking, (so shallow are all their poor heads,)
That all this is what the wise Christian most dreads.
They think that of course he resembles themselves,
And must give up his faith at sight of their shelves.
Thus sillier, shallower, grown every day,
While scorning and shunning the safe common way,
All common sense truly they then contradict,
And from phrases outlandish must meaning be pick'd,
While handling, and lab'ling, and sorting each day,
Their minerals, skeletons, all their last stay;
And how can a heart thus renounced and despised
Believe truths of the soul by humanity prized?

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By the "civilized" not; for I know well the word,
Which is used in a new sense, and rather absurd;
The "civilized" all are in one point agreed,
They need not one faith or particular creed.
But what are these clever and civilized men?
Or what weight is due to their cavilling then?
If you wish to know how the "civilized" shine,
Get ask'd to their circles and see how they dine.
To have things decorous and all their own way,
To feast all alone leaving nothing to say,
While safe to find what will conduce to their ease,
With no one in sight but their dear selves to please,
Is what they maintain with no end of expense;
But for all that I say, Deliver me thence!
Your wonder will cease when pedantic old sinners
Ope depths where no heart lies at th' end of their dinners,
Low cringing to rich men, and flinging at God
Some sign of their doubts by a word or a nod;
Still leering and sneering with laughter to chase
The blush that steals over some younger guest's face
Lit with smiles, though in order still courteous to be,
While inwardly puzzled far more than you see;
For not every mind is composed of the stuff
To make a philosopher apt and enough.
Avaunt their decorum, so far from the fair,
While all that corrupts and degrades man is there;

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For harlots and prodigals out of the street
Would disdain what you must there swallow with meat.
Compared with these sceptics quite pure are the low,
For whom by this contrast affection will grow.
Sheer nonsense, some tell you, 'tis rash to provoke
The bachelors old; but to me a mere joke
Appears their whole type of progressive perfection
Taken for granted, without any mention,
As if the true mark of all right English stuff
Were something that's arrogant, dull, coarse, and rough.
However that point may be settled by you,
That faith here can't flourish is what we all knew,
So doubts now adopted by men this way wise,
Have no right prescriptive to cause you surprise.

The last class remaining, the least I believe,
Is that which with love even seeks to deceive,
Though no one could fancy this way was their own,
With looks, airs, and manners that Love must disown.
But so it is with them, hard, ill-looking, vile,
Still trusting in hideousness some to beguile,
Or rather made confident, knowing that gold
Can aye work more wonders than ever were told.
Epicurus for these beauties opens his sty;
When religion they doubt, you need scarcely ask why.
If you throw pearls before them, they cover with mire
The things which humanity loves to admire.

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They indicate also, whate'er some may write,
That cruelty, baseness, may not be finite,
That endless may be the duration of woe
For those who resolved to be mix'd with them so,
Though they catch words from ethical science high,
To scout what no wise man will dare to deny.
How strange this agreement on different ground!
With pedants and sophists these foul droves are found.
Those others had still left the natural light
Which could, if well used, have directed them right.
There was dignity too in science, though vain,
To compensate for that which the heart can sustain;
But now we find baseness that revels in mire,
Without one noble fancy, or one good desire,
With something the Stagyrite thought on the whole
That argued a totally different soul
From that which belongs to our poor human race,
In which even he can Divinity trace[2].
The selfish in essence, intense, and quite pure,
Leaves nothing beside it to act and endure;
While cowards with sly and inveterate tricks,
'Tis only their conscience that now never pricks:
Mean, stingy, exacting, and feeling no sting
Tormenting some poor little mite of a thing,
For chance will cause sometimes to cling to a stone
A soft, pretty tendril that near it has grown.

[2] Mor. ad Nic. x. 7.

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Such wise men I think then in reality,
Pure monsters may be in their morality.
All harden'd to commonest feelings thus made,
Their first or their last step is, WOMAN betray'd.
When that is effected, there's nothing then left;
Of God and of all sense of truth they're bereft.
Then down to the depths of thick darkness, though slow,
They glide irresistibly, sinking below
The longest deep plummets that men ever cast,
Till from visible spheres they're sever'd and past.
Oh heaven! to think thus that such a dark fate
Should impend over any in this mortal state!
That man once created to reign as a king
Should sink to become such a vile, abject thing!
So nameless, so monstrous, so clear an exception
To all else that's visible in the creation!
While having no object, no hope, and no end,
But thus in vacuity restless to spend
A life so right wondrous and partly divine,
Which aye, through eternity, glorious should shine;
Now even while mortal almost like a god,
While all things on earth seem to wait on his nod;
To death alone subjected, and that even still,
His Maker's high purpose that he might fulfil,
By passing away hence from this world to soar
Where he'll see what he b'lieved in, and there can adore.
But thus it must be; and experience each day
Reveals how some *will* take this fathomless way.

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And where is the wonder that such things are dead
To truths that could fire the heart and the head?
So the heartless and proud with sophists thus fall,
And leave a short lesson that's needful to all.
For who can be safe on the sea of these days,
When each with no compass still follows his ways;
Intent on all studies but those which relate
To duties of men in their present brief state?
As if mental culture were sheer waste of time,
Unless with some interests of earth it can chime.
Trust interests of science to men without thought,
Do you think that the end will be what you sought?
Can merchants succeed without notions of trade?
Without some due training can soldiers be made?
How can men retain faith in things of the soul,
If on hearts, studies, deeds, it can have no control?
Then why should you wonder if some will deny
The doctrines from which ever constant they fly?
Beware of the atmosphere breathed by you then,
Pronounced by them wholesome, beware of the men;
Their numbers can yield you but little excuse;
Unless you're untaught or densely obtuse:
Though infidels busy and banded you see,
Yet never was faith more victorious and free.
Golden dawn never gleam'd in the east more bright,
Than hopes now arise to the Christian's sight.
Distinguish the good from the bad in these times;
May such be the fruit of these deep-ponder'd rhymes!

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IN MEMORIAM.

THE day is fine, the scene around is bright,
Through gardens, woods, and sloping fields I stray;
But an old haunted temple is in sight;
And now to that I take my lonely way.

Let sunshine light up all with cheerful glow;
Let trees and flowers cheer each careless eye;
That temple has its visions to bestow;
To which the wounded heart will often fly.

'Tis memory's palace, solemn and august;
Within we find the beings that we love;
No falling here to ruin and to dust,
With shades immortal of what lives above.

Soft gleams of light here pass before the eyes!
Sweetness and peace! on earth no other such!
Deception? No, 'tis truth that does surprise,
Seen, felt, accessible as if to touch!

For not to error is it ever given,
Without an effort or an act of will,
To fancy thus a glimpse of what's in heaven,
Merely obtain'd by its own presence still.

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Contentment so complete, profoundly calm,
Denotes the absence of man's self-deceit;
The unseen world only sheds such balm,
Mysteriously and without danger sweet.

I enter; silence reigns, yet with a crowd;
The last fled thither comes to meet me first.
I see her not enwrapp'd with ghastly shroud,
But as she lived;—and forth my hot tears burst.

By pity only mortals here are good[1]:
Some pity enters ever into love;
Compassion for ourselves is understood;
Yes, even when we love great God above.

But here was youth that pass'd through sorrows long,
By grief itself too snapp'd off ere its prime:
Shall pity not be heard in this faint song,
Though all her woes have pass'd away with time?

I see her in the wondrous eye of mind,
Our joy, our pride, as if still one of us,
So tender, delicate, so gracious, kind,
Mysterious beauty compassing her thus,—

Her large blue eyes, cast down upon me, smile
As once on earth when issuing from Mass,
When she would draw me upwards to beguile
The sorrow deep in which she saw me pass.

[1] Joubert.

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Yes, in the downward look of those blue eyes
While somehow struggling upwards to burst free,
There was a sign that pointed to the skies
To warn, to cheer, to guide, and comfort me.

And in the distance of those blissful shores
She wishes now our lips should breathe a smile,
Some moisture ooze, if need, from liquid stores
To mark how absence hearts cannot beguile.

Yes, there she wishes, what on earth she fear'd,
That in our moments of domestic joy
Her image may not quite have disappear'd,
And that at times her name we might employ.

Some trait of happiness in former days
She wishes now might linger in our mind,
To cheer us when we think upon her ways,
A source of cheerfulness in her to find.

Yes, floating on that flood of light and love,
She grants a little mention might be made
Of her who love from others must approve,
While cold they wander through the tearful shade.

A gentle sadness when of her we speak;
But ever ready to relapse to joy;
Such now is all the tribute she would seek,
And that alone for our sakes she'd employ.

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Lætitia, Mary, Anna,—there thou art,
The same as ever! What was there to change?
Could heaven alter thy pure, fervent heart,
With God and angels ever there to range?

Enveloped always with thy modest veil,
Which nature gives each flower in its youth:
No mischief from without could e'er prevail
To taint thy beauty in its inmost truth.

Hence thy pure taste, so delicate and strong,
Imagination which its polish aye retain'd;
Thy thoughts so wing'd to soar up with a song,
Flexible and patient, never strain'd.

Thy love of what is innocent in joy,
So long familiar, to thy childhood known,
No need the least of efforts to employ,
To feel that happiness in thee is sown.

That velvet softness of the brightest flower,
That thirst to live for ever, and here now,
That perfume of a true unearthly bower,
That constant goodness without wish or vow.

Still finding in thy God, thy life, thy breast,
All that which music never can intone,
The presence here of an immortal rest,
Through perfect love, the universe thine own.

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A home's last link to heaven! such wert thou!
A girl ruling, and cherishing us all!
Oh! tender sanctities, where are ye now?
Oh! home once precious, thou hast seen a fall!

Who bids me leave this hall within the mind?
Who says let life resume its wonted way?
Well, lead me forth; I yield and quite resign'd;
But yet not see her still, I never may.

Shall I sing on? For feelings when profound
Invoke a veil to screen the inmost soul,
Delight in silence, not in vocal sound,
Though angel's music o'er the bruised heart stole.

And yet I needs must tell of what I see,
The vision that still haunts this mind on earth,
A flower's beauty—rarest harmony
A scent of Eden where we drew our birth.

Memory's fragrance, perfume of the past,
Sweets of melancholy, life's autumn flower;
Yes: these with life below will ever last;
A distant odour from Elysian bower.

In those eternal gardens shall we meet?
No mortal breath can say yes without pride;
But here she walks through emanations sweet
In minds of those once charmèd at her side.

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O true Lamartine, thou hast said it well;
A voice recalls an image to the heart,
A moment serves a whole past life to tell,
A guarded tear will then resistless start.

But in that tear a universe is found;
The heart is like an edifice that's lone,
The more deserted, louder is the sound,
And deeper echoes claim it for their own.

I visit places that in life she knew;
I see survivors that to her were dear;
She ever meets me when the scene I view;
To those once loved she still is very near.

In vain I leave the vast and ruin'd hall
Where memory reigns acknowledged and confest;
The power exists in things both great and small,
To call her to me from supernal rest.

The tall and graceful her noble form show;
The beds of flowers, her sweet, quiet seat;
The moon and stars she loved and studied so—
While musing on them her you raptured meet.

There are, the Roman poet said, who gaze
On the great orbs of Heaven without fear[2]:
Hers was a calm and silent deep amaze;
When looking at them now methinks she's near.

[2] —— Sunt qui formidine nulla
spectent!

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And what a presence in the starry night!
She saw them thus, enraptured with the view,
No longer she is now within your sight,
But all the wonder that you feel she knew.

Then leave the casement at sweet music's call;
Within 'tis she who gives the ruling tone;
When deepest harmony entrances all,
The first place there unquestion'd is her own.

The tissue quaint, embroider'd with such care,
Places her seated working by your side;
In churches too—oh, yes, above all there
With you she stays and each day will abide!

Graces themselves bring back her person fond,
The bright, the innocent, the noble mind,
The spirit dauntless, never to despond,
In these herself, as living still, you find.

When thoughtless vanity wears out the night,
When tedious prattle wearies, tortures me,
Oh then I think of what is beyond sight,
Oh then, Lætitia, thy great sense I see!

Sense of the homely virtues and the true,
Woman's true influence so wise, so holy,
That sheds on all things Heaven's bless'd dew,
Dispelling grief and loathed melancholy.

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When holy customs all are laid aside—
  When witless strangers their own folly show,
Oh then I see how reason must deride
  The things thou fledst from when with us below!

And thus it is that poets are so true,
  When, singing stages of the soul above,
They say, as if thyself they once well knew,
  To comprehend is higher than to love.

If life's afflictions grow and press around,
  If daily cares withdraw the mind from peace,
'Tis then I think of what thou must have found
  The instant that from time thou hadst release.

Besides, too, while on earth what was thy joy?
  Ethereal, tender, far beyond our ken;
With smiles, sweet words, like others thou wouldst toy;
  But thou didst soar a seraph even then.

I fain would sing of thee to mortals here,
  And bid them mark thy spirit that has pass'd,
'Twould make them angels if they saw thee near;
  Their best resolves would then for ever last.

But thou art now encircled with a light
  That baffles sense and leaves a blank around:
Only my lyre responds beyond our sight,
  She soars, in song, in heart not to be found.

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Harsh all the music of our earthly sphere,
Those sounds on which she fed her sense of love,
When distant, faint in thought she will appear,
Lost in such brightness, its whole reign above!

All burning words distinct are here but cold;
'Tis only silence holy I would hear;
Wouldst thou a soul's mysterious leaves unfold?
The glow within would simply disappear.

Yes, vain are words to open what I see;
It will fade shrinking from the outward sense;
'Tis not for tongues to chant the mystery,
Words, songs, and music, all are but pretence.

THE CHURCH.

(IMITATED FROM A POEM BY C. MACKAY.)

THERE'S a home, a true home, where is peace for the mind,
Though distracted and wounded, to which it can fly,
When the storm is rising, with no shelter to find,
And nothing seems left us but to lie down and die,
Peacefullest, cheerfullest,
Mystical, natural,

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High on a rock placed, serene above waves,
Safe ever, lost never,
Thy home, my home,
Cold, sinking mortals, she helps and she saves.

There's a home, a sweet home, which some fly from with joy;
Then a moment's forgetfulness shuts her from view;
For they thought it sufficient to play with some toy;
But the night came, and back to her shelter they flew.
Serenest, securest,
Spotless, dauntless,
Home of the strong, of the weak and the frail,
Watch'd over, bless'd over,
Thy home, my home,
Assail'd by the demons, but angels prevail.

Oh! poor man was not meant like a brute beast to roam,
With no divine presence to enlighten his way;
Though now banish'd from Eden, he still had a home,
Where great God and His angels for ever would stay.
Merciful, wonderful,
Near to him, close to him,

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Like fire to bathe the desert with light,
Piercing, revealing,
Directing, denoting,
Cheering and guiding through this world's night.

The ark and the pillar, the temple and Levites,
All the faint first traditions, with many still left,
Are to yield when thick darkness the world invites
To pass on to that brightness of which it's bereft.
Unearthly, heavenly,
Burning and shining,
Lit up for all men, and ever in view;
Unshrouded, undoubted,
Most plainly, most clearly,
The same as the oldest kindled anew.

Oh! why should a Presence though real be doubted,
So conformable thus to the first divine plan?
Or why should our faith by weak reason be scouted
For believing a truth so important for man?
So biblical, literal,
So needful, so fruitful
In the sweet virtues that nature must love?
Heroic, angelic,
Fulfilling, completing,
Graces that wing us for realms above?

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Let our praises be full and sonorous with joy;
Let bright forms of beauty show transports of mind,
All your strength, all your daring for ever employ,
To extol such a Shepherd so careful and kind,
Cherishing, nourishing,
As of old, we are told,
All those who follow to pastures of rest,
Tending them, feeding them,
His guests too, His heirs too,
Intended hereafter for what is best.

There's a home like our own, but lasting for ever,
Where all those whom we loved here each day we can find,
Half on earth, half in heaven, from which nought can sever
The true hearts which affection will fondly still bind.
Domestic, though mystic;
The dearest, the sweetest,
Where loved ones departed still haunt, and remain,
Watching, admiring,
Pitying, and shielding
Those here who of life's bitter sorrow complain.

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There's a home, a safe home, an Eden more lasting
Far than that from which Adam was exiled of old,—
The Church through which mortals are ever still hasting
To pass on to the region where God they behold;
While below, even so,
In silence, endurance,
He's veil'd and exposed for us to adore;
Abiding, providing,
So steady, so ready
To waft us to glory, life evermore.

HOLY WEEK.

Yes, all is true; we live unseen in soul,
Not in material tissues which but serve
To cause the outward frame in part or whole,
Never completely from the will to swerve.
To soul we owe whatever's most intense—
That which invisible, delights and grieves;
The body, a mere instrument of sense,
Each man who thinks to live by it, deceives.

But say, what proof is here so striking, new,
To cause this cry spontaneous from the heart?
It is the week just past that we review,
The Holy Week that must this sense impart.

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Within a chapel old and lowly here [1],
Where French confessors, exiles, found their all,
The rites and visions that did now appear,
Tore from some minds a dark and sadden'd pall.

Pall which blind custom, sprung from passions vain,
Had led them to endure without a thought,
Though mind dethroned, all is disorder, pain,
Whatever ends may be design'd and sought.
'Tis the great week that can its reign restore,
And to its sway our passions even bind,
When God in spirit men with love adore,
And echoes of the past immortal find!

And oh! if mind for moments gains such strength,
On some like us so purposeless and vain,
How must it rule o'er others whose life's length
It dedicates its power to sustain!
We but like vagrants come to see the last;
They ever follow'd to the Mount or shore;
To them familiar all the gracious past,
How must they love, and weep, and wonder more!

For nothing new to them His presence mild;
The poor they courted and they saw Him there;
They found Him with the frail one or the child,
While with themselves to rich men He'd repair.
On lake's blue waves, or on the verdant sod,
They join'd Him teaching the poor common mass;
How must they burn when here they follow God,
When now with Him to Calvary they pass!

[1] King-street, Portman-square.

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Lo the Procession! youths with palms raised high,
Now usher in the mystic solemn feast.
But triumph short! for soon is heard the sigh,
The Passion chanted, so this joy has ceased.
But thus all joy to sorrow quickly yields,
Procession first, and then the Passion too;
'Tis only elsewhere in the blissful fields,
That we the latter ever can eschew.

The wave recedes; the mental plain is dry,
But a recurring tide flows now with might,
The mind concentrated in purpose high,
To suffer with the just in sable night.
Tenebræ, darkness, such the ancient word
For the great moments mental which begin,
When Prophets' lamentations will be heard,
And mind will ponder what can high Heaven win.

Then mind transports us with a real power;
The common scenes of English life are past;
We yield to the impressions of the hour,
And think the feeling must for ever last.
Where stand we? say! on Sion's holy hill,
Or in the garden where the olive pale
Casts its blue shade amidst the twilight still,
And red gleams linger o'er the sadden'd vale.

Tones never heard but now, sad, solemn, slow,
Short melodies at intervals most sweet,
Soft rapt words murmur'd half suppress'd by woe,
Such the means used and for the great end meet,

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To raise up visions grave with mystic calm,
Preparing you for what is to succeed,
When on the morrow is dispensed the balm
Of which the human spirit aye has need.

Oh, innocence restored! oh, peace of heart!
Oh, wondrous union with the source of life!
Which raises man renew'd in every part,
Above the vain world and its vainest strife!
Already is rekindled in the mind
A light of youth fresh, sparkling, rich, and bright,
A sense of beauty showing itself kind,
To dwell with rapture on what meets the sight.

But hush, my soul, that sense must now be still;
Keep thy new secret, elsewhere let it burn,
Sporting with nature, as youth ever will;
To gravest transports we must now return.
In gorgeous vestments the great Mass is sung,
'Tis the last gift of Him about to die;
For last joy organs peal, while bells are rung,
The rest is silence, save the holy sigh.

Vexilla Regis, but a sigh that chant!
Altars are stript; of love it is the hour,
Feet wash'd and kiss'd show then how hearts can pant
When touch'd by charity to feel its power.

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'Tis evening; Tenebræ and prayer again
Draw the crowds mourning where deep sorrows dwell;
Of stone the breasts that do not love the strain
Of such complaints and those who heed them well.

The morning dawns so sad for human good,
The Passion almost seen, then chanted, follows,
The crowd bows down to kiss the sacred wood,
And all from hoar antiquity it borrows.
It prays and kneels for men of each estate—
Kings, pontiffs, pilgrims, heretics and all,
Pagans and Jews; there's no one for whose fate
The inward tears do not with fervour fall.

Oh, let those prayers and sighs be ever heard!
Then all men breathing we shall truly love;
Heed not when passion dictates words absurd,
And you will live like angels there above.
Beneath the Cross three hours of agony,
Behold men rapt with ardency of mind,
All fill'd with pity, wonder, melancholy,
At the great price to save our human kind.

The silent eve has fill'd the church anew,
To hear the Passion preach'd as only can
Compose that other Christ, the Cross in view,
Who joins with faith the heart o ransom'd man.

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Tenebræ follows, and all then is o'er,
But oh, how soon is Heaven's joy foreseen!
Pale death hears trembling, "Triumph never more."
Faith rises, though still shades will intervene.

'Tis night, a fervent chosen few remain,
And lo! the Virgin Mother joins them there;
The Stabat Mater, that mysterious strain,
Then softly rises with the tearful prayer.
That old, that wondrous, most pathetic song,
That kneeling, feeling, weeping, thoughtful crowd,
Produce impressions that will all belong
To those bright gems mortality must shroud.

The holy Sabbath dawns, we kneel to light—
The light of Christ symbolically shown;
The angel trumpet sounds with swelling might,
The Paschal taper hears the plaintive tone
Of Prophets' voices mingled with a prayer;
Prostrate, the host of Heaven is implored;
Veils all withdrawn, the Mass commences there,
And then foreseen is risen Christ adored.

The evening come, Regina Cœli sung,
Thrills of deep rapture close the hopeful day.
Ere morning dawns, hark! bells in peals are rung;
Haste to the tomb, who can an instant stay?
Surrexit Dominus, risen now indeed!
Risen! the grave could not detain Him long;
Just as He said, resistless is His speed;
Let organs swell, and glorious be our song.

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Oh, sons and daughters of the human race,
Invited thus to pour forth grateful hearts,
Behold the hands, the feet, the side, and trace
The source which everlasting life imparts!
Hence all your doubts, incredulous ne'er be;
My Lord, my God, let this be your reply;
Exult at sight of immortality;
Finish'd is all, that you may never die.

Such is the order that the mind surveys—
From first to last an action as if seen;
While of sweet private things it still conveys
A sense, as if by stealth that comes between.
For life thus five whole days, all breathed with others,
Produces love and friendship that is real,
So felt as if indeed we all were brothers,
Left not with shadows and yet still ideal.

A mental neighbourhood has always charms.
To cherish thoughts in common that are high,
To prize the same thing, fly the same that harms,
Together in some beauteous port to lie—
This quite alone can constitute a bond
That years of absence hardly can dissolve.
How much more each of others will grow fond
When secret love for them is pure resolve!

Faces familiar grown surround us there;
The women holy, with an air so kind,
Parents who mourn, bow'd down so long in prayer,
With youths and maidens; thoughtful all you find.

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Then servants ancient with their masters kneeling;
Young mistresses and handmaidens though gay,
With all one mind, one deep true tone of feeling,
To their loved Lord true homages to pay.

We seem of each to know the inmost heart;
These lads so tall yet lately acolytes,
At the least want observed will quickly start
To serve the Priests and do whate'er the rites
Require, as if still children at command.
How truly they have loved these French priests then,
Since, uncommission'd, sitting each so grand,
What mere boys did, they now will do as men.

I own I love simplicity, thus found
Within this chapel, of great means bereft.
Methinks it hallows more the sacred ground,
When to spontaneous action aught is left.
Then there is holiness to mark so near
In many, deep attention seen in all;
At sight of sanctity you drop a tear,
To hide it, sinking on the ground you fall.

O wondrous privilege, thou mystic fold!
Within thee souls are seen by outward eyes,
Replete with thoughts that never can be told,
And with a knowledge tending to the skies.

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Elsewhere 'tis mind that must the body serve,
Affected chiefly by what strikes the sight,
But here enfranchised, scorning thus to swerve,
It shows in action all its depth and might.

Then love's true charity divine is now
The element you breathe to feed your mind;
If ever to see others be your vow,
These are the days you'd pass with human kind.
Alas! for Christians wishing then to fly
From cities where they mingle with the crowd,
Seeking the wilds of nature, no one nigh!
In them I fear you simply see the proud.

In a great common joy why wish to be
Alone in parks or by the sea-girt shore?
Alone what would be immortality?
A torturing sad penalty, no more.
Be ours the Easter Day in crowded street,
The seeing, touching beings that we love;
He is risen! to each stranger that we meet,
We then would say as angels may above.

But all is finish'd and the vision past;
So thus is felt the life of higher being;
Oh that this peace and love might ever last,
While yet by faith we live still darkly seeing!
But sorrow is the lot of men below;
We wept the mystic grief of God made man;
We grieved for days of grief that could bestow
More peace than triumphs even ever can.

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Those days so sweetly calm with such old sorrow,
We grieve that they have quickly pass'd away;
Alas! the joy succeeding has its morrow,
Will it continue thus ourselves to sway?
For fearful we anticipate the power,
Of all the snares that glue the wings of mind.
Remain with us, O Lord, this evening hour,
And to thy heart our natures ever bind.

How clear the life of thought in such a fold,
Fed round our Lord in sorrow and in joy,
All feeling, thinking, as, we have been told,
His first disciples did their time employ!
Now mourning, as if each the garden sought,
Pressing then round to follow Him to death,
Then all absorb'd, to ponder as they ought,
And hope for constancy to latest breath!

How sweet to feel that joy, angelic, high,
Vouchsafed to Magdalen before the tomb!
When fled like night was every tear and sigh,
Leaving ecstatic rapture in their room!
How sweet to live with Mary and St. John,
Seeing the past in one vast blaze of light,
With life immortal granted to each one
Whose grief and joy still soothe, enrapture sight!

Forgiveness—to the weakest now so near!
Apostles running at the frail one's call;
For, risen, first to her He will appear,
And bid her then announce it unto all.

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What intervals of life can you compare
With these intelligence thus freely grants?
Oh why then later should they be so rare,
Since ever for them even nature pants?

How sweet to live with men who so agree,
How sweet to contemplate our Saviour kind,
How sweet it is to love them cordially,
How sweet to follow both our heart and mind!
"Mane nobiscum," we too humbly cry,
'Tis late, and shades on all sides now descend.
Remain with us on earth until we die;
And then will peaceful transport be our end.

THE COMPLAINT OF NATURE.

THE wail of Nature has been heard of old[1],
But all its wrongs have never yet been told.
Besides, increasing with the roll of years,
The whole great sum in no past age appears.
Though thwarted, outraged, sold, forsaken quite,
No one seems pain'd when she has not her right.
And yet when Nature's injured, it is men
Who are themselves afflicted, injured, then.
The very child who just begins to feel,
The youth, the maid, the aged, might appeal

[1] Alanus de Insulis, De planctu naturæ.

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To Nature from the blind or unjust band,
Who for a thousand motives her command
Oppose, elude, misrepresent, defy,
Some even fancying that Heaven's eye
Looks on approvingly, while others blame
That which if view'd aright should cause no shame.
Shudder not, Muses, at a theme so vast,
As if a glance at all I mean to cast.
I seek but to unload a heavy heart,
Lamenting of these wrongs a random part,
Such as have sometimes cut me to the brain,
Leaving on brightest thoughts a certain stain;
As if, bewilder'd by conflicting voices,
Nothing was left untroubled that rejoices
Those who view Nature as the heavenly plan
Intended first, when God created Man.
While wandering thus we find here but a spring
Yielding light bubbles, of which first I'll sing.
Then later, when the streamlet grows in might,
Much graver consequences come in sight.
But all is noxious rising thus to fill
The scenes of life with many forms of ill.
For that which weakens or corrupts the soil,
Whatever grows upon it can but spoil.
And Nature is the ground on which we raise
The flowers and fruits that yield the needful praise
To Him who gives and will require the whole
To grow harmonious with the human soul.
We seek not Nature from His will to sever,
But to view both conjoin'd in beauty ever.

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For beauty is what both will still create,
Effacing all that can inspire dull hate
In minds that love the true, the fair, the good,
When nought is alter'd or misunderstood.

Nature at first, then, gently will complain,
That some behold in her but one dark stain,
Defiling every form and colour bright,
Till all becomes a hideous moral night.
So that e'en progress loudly is defied,
As if to wish for it were simply pride.
And some comprise within their sternest ban,
Those who deem war not natural to man.
As if it should be left to those who spurn
All Christian faith to hate fell Mars' return,
To mourn that war, or victory, or death,
Should still be deem'd the noblest cry of breath;
That charms of Nature in her happy rest
Should seldom be esteem'd what's wisest, best;
That glory, with Chimæras old and new,
Should still be ever ready to renew
The dismal tragedies of private woe,
Which from the public follies often grow;
That, when one might have drunk at fountains clear,
Or thought, or loved, with all bright flowers near,
Or listen'd to the lark while true hearts meet,
To kill our brother should be held more sweet.
Nature laments when men both grave and wise,
These words of poets, though their foes, despise.

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As if, because our state is fallen so,
The sweets of lasting peace can never grow.
In brief, she mourns her sad and hapless fate,
When truth is made to minister to hate,
When doctrines supernaturally known
Are used to rob her of what is her own.
She thinks herself dismantled and defaced,
But not with every primal charm effaced.
He must be poorly gifted, if not blind,
Who cannot these in plenteous measure find.
The smiling child, the damsel and the boy—
Who is not pleased with these, can scarce enjoy
The workmanship Divine on every side,
Presented through the world so far and wide.
Yet if alone what Nature gives is left,
Unnoticed, of regard it is bereft.
Fond Nature spreads her feast each day and hour,
Inviting us to joy within her bower.
But who comes to it from the busy crowd?
Some have no taste, and others are too proud,
While sophists come to pry and to disclose
What science, oft perverted, only knows,
Thinking to find in insects and in flowers
Excuse for bad men in their vilest hours;
Although at feast so beauteous and august,
Attend with grateful wonder good men must.
Proud science too comes offering rich prize
To those who Nature in her plants defies,
Producing out of season flowers, fruits,
Or dressing even them in foreign suits,

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Thus staining roses black or blue their aim,
As if insensible to poet's blame.
For Nature has her harmonies most sweet,
And these by your inventions you defeat;
Since fruits or flowers in season not their own
Cease to complete her graduated tone.
But follies such as these she deigns not view,
Her march majestic she will still renew.
Then what a banquet for the human eye
Are the pure tints of an unnoticed sky!
Nature complains, that few an instant spare
To feast their minds with her great beauty there;
That men find time for law, for gain so proud,
But not for marking how she gilds the cloud.
She mourns obduracy like this to see,
Extending e'en to smother charity.
Those on whom fortune smiles may be caress'd,
But what is thought of others roughly dress'd?
Few eyes, alas! discover beauty there!
The poor are neither fine, nor bright, nor fair.
Nature revolts at such unequal praise,
At what she thinks unjust and partial ways;
Nor will she be content until you find
There's much to praise in all of human kind.
Then Nature loves the moderate and free,
Her simple unadulterated glee.
Nature complains, when sports and recreations
Are made as serious as affairs of nations.
To climb, to run, to row, can please her heart,
But not when moderation finds no part;

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When you can neither swim, nor ride, nor walk,
Unless to furnish subject for men's talk;
When science medical must first be gain'd,
To show how all your force can be sustain'd.
All this is acting quite athwart her will,
Which seeks by pastime freedom ever still,
Intending play to be mere youthful frolic,
And not a thing for pedants scientific.
A merry round requireth no display,
As if æsthetics only were the way.
Sport with the muscles needs no calculation
Of human force conjoin'd with ponderation.
A youth might row or jump the live-long day,
Though science were not all he had to say.
Dynamics, equilibrium—all that
To common ears will still sound rather flat.
The fact, you see, is, Nature is so nice
She feels the fault of least things in a trice.
These are, I grant, but light and childish things,
She comes to glance at what her anger brings.
The wanton wrongs of creatures wrought by men!
What can yield vent for her abhorrence then?
You wound her soul too deeply for a sigh,
When cruelty to these she can descry.
"Spanish ideas" these some will now defend,
But Gautier's reasons will not Nature bend;
And Nature, through the Vatican, once spoke,
You may 'gainst beast-tormentors both invoke.
But England too with battues and the chace,
Can sometimes render pensive Nature's face.

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And poets often echo but her wail,
When angry made to see the sport prevail,
The hunter coming with his fatal shot,
Where all was love if there he had been not:
Though evil strange and still more hateful lies,
Where epicures her heart can more surprise.
Oh, cursed spot upon the human mind!
Perhaps the meanest crime of all our kind,
Religion own'd and practised such an art
As shows for beasts and birds a want of heart!
It makes one doubt the whole of what's within,
Men acquiescing with no sense of sin.
But all too odious this for Nature's wail,
And graver interests needs must now prevail.
Dame Nature has her rights, though duties all,
Yet some would these resist, and e'en enthral,
Seeming to think there must be in their charm
A secret evil to mislead and harm.
But why confound a passion with a fault?
To do this surely wise men never ought.
Passion as fire is needed to impel
Our human nature to achieve what's well.
And if at times it creeps o'er fetid mire,
It much more often rises to aspire
At somewhat that is far above this earth,
Although you think that there it had its birth.
Suspected, stigmatized by men who rave,
Nature complains that she is made a slave;
That all her gifts for purposes of good
Seem snares and gins that ought to be withstood;

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That love itself so holy and divine
Should never be permitted once to shine,
Where there is any wish to gain the prize
Which crowns the martyr when the hero dies;
That all must show a mere sombre sour leaven,
Where the poor heart has the least hope of heaven.
Yet are there wrongs of which she won't complain,
Though here from hinting one she can't refrain.
For Nature, soft, and delicate, and shy,
To sense of poetry comes often nigh;
And 'tis a hurt inflicted on her heart,
When she is forced to play another part.
For some things Nature would still ask retreat,
And not to have them shown along the street.
A little tender mystery is well,
She thinks; nor would she always loudly tell
Exactly each thing for the public view,
When her great ends her children would pursue.
Manners she thinks half barbarous might borrow
From her a hint, and cause no social sorrow.
But still she's silent; anger she won't show;
Enough, the sanction'd order wills it so.
Still there's another source of grief allied
To what she mourns in silence when defied.
For if in joys we swerve from her bright will,
In things of death we contravene her still.
For customs, institutions, all are framed
To make death seem a thing to be most blamed;
Most hideous forms we all approve of then,
To scare, mislead, and purely trouble men.

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Whereas poor Nature now restored by God
Would cast but flowers upon the hallow'd sod;
Denoting that she views our passage hence
As real good, and that without pretence;
Bidding us leave as we first enter'd here,
Without blind passion, or regret, or fear;
Reminding us that to the whole belongs
This passage as a final part of songs.
"A part of life," a sage once did it call,
Not a false movement to disturb it all.
If Joubert would interpret for her thus,
To mark her sorrow may be pardon'd us.
For griefs like these she lifts her eyes above;
Her cries are kept for those of outraged love.
For oh! what errors haunt the deepest mind,
When it will prove unnatural, unkind,
Dogmatic, fierce, like Pharisees of old,
Forgetting lessons we have all been told!
From what dark source do men such notions draw?
So unlike what is found in that New Law
Which makes the love of God and one another
The badge and mark by which to know a brother
Knit with us truly in those secret bonds,
With which man never boasts and ne'er desponds.
'Tis from resisting Nature even here,
And her great voice of feeling, though so clear.
For what one feels is sooth what God bestows[2],
And therefore much more sure than what one knows.

[2] Lamartine.

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For mark, our reasonings are made by man ;
Only from God gain sentiment we can.
Your sentiment is reas'ning ready made,
Which leaves your logic often in the shade.
'Tis man who thinks ; but it is Nature feels,
And God made Nature, as all truth reveals.
Nature heard God before man ever spoke,
Yet men their reasoning 'gainst her cries invoke!
Though far from schools, methinks I hear her cry,
Complaining how their sophists her defy,
When mind from soul they madly separate,
By process which she needs must deadly hate ;
I mean that abstract reasoning of men,
Which Joubert says becomes pernicious then.
For Nature, like this champion of her ways,
Can smile at errors of young, simple days,
At follies link'd with her in childlike love ;
But what she loathes and never will approve,
Are errors learned, artificial, made
Of false men, hoping for them to be paid.
She owns with him that truth has much less charms
When with reflection chosen, yielding arms
For the discursive faculties of man,
Who loves to argue always as he can.
Ideas, feelings, all of calculation,
Must form for her apart a doubtful nation.
She yields the ignorant abundant light,
Which sophists always would exclude from sight.
She loud complains that men so proud and stern
Her pupils teach, what she taught, to unlearn;

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Their end of study being to know less
Than those who studies never made express.
Thus will she wander from the special grief,
For which in sweet affections is relief.
For sooth, though never, never yet beguiled,
In rules of rhetoric she's still a child.
Nature, in fine, agrees with that great page,
Which only can our thirst for truth assuage.
See all the vistas of the Book Divine,
'Tis love and tenderness that there will shine.
God gives more freedom than some chairs allow;
And that's a truth but little heeded now,
When moral phrases, professorial, cold,
Adapted neither for the young nor old,
Are thought to lay down and to teach the whole
Of what should guide men, heedless of the soul,
Which may or may not suffer all the while,
For aught some care, indulging this false style,
More suited to a Pagan stoic sage,
Than to the wisdom of a Christian age.

But now th' infecting stream is found to glide
With darker vapours and a fuller tide.
Nature complains of what we grieve to mention,
Of wrongs inflicted through a false religion.
'Twas much, through sternness of cold worldly pride,
To hem her in, curtail'd on every side.
'Tis worse to brand her with an impious fame,
And say that it is Heaven which casts the blame.

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To be unnatural through pride is bad,
But to be so through creeds, is far more sad.
For then we spread a veil before the light,
Whose blissful rays would keep all nature bright;
And so create distaste and wild aversion,
For that which glad hearts all should love and live on.
Nothing comes straight from our Creator's hand
But what is useful, hopeful, gracious, bland.
He paints the flower with which nothing vies;
He gives it scent as if to cause surprise;
To slake our thirst, He makes the water cool,
In each thing seeming to adopt the rule,
To give to all that lives what yields it pleasure,
While form'd in season to submit to measure.
What kindness in the Maker of that fruit,
Which must the palate and the season suit!
What skill in blending colours for the ground,
And such as in the sky are ever found!
For music, to uplift the soul on wings,
He wills that harmony should be in strings,
In vibratory movements of the air,
He needs no more, and all is sweetness there.
In Nature thus we mark the constant plan,
To aid the art and cheer the thoughts of man.
And yet all this is rudely push'd aside
By some, intent to cause division wide
Between enjoyment of this Nature pure
And what is hoped for ever may endure.
As if to scorn of present gifts the store
Could prove that we deserved hereafter more!

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Of course at times 'tis well men should deny
Themselves, and cherish some great holy sigh.
And Nature even never would complain,
When there were motives minds thus to sustain
By some high acts of intellectual force;
But what she mourns for is when men divorce,
By law too general applied to all,
The bond uniting, even since the fall,
The sweet and wholesome pleasures of this earth
And the great duties of celestial birth.
'Tis then she's wrong'd and feels herself defied,
Not by religion, but by human pride.
Opposed to teachers thus so cold and stern,
Let us her secrets wise with love discern.
Instructed thus, our part is still to try
To cheer, not heighten human misery.
The bird in spring that sings upon the bough
Was meant to yield us pleasure even now.
The primrose pale, the sweet soft verdant grass,
Are offer'd freely unto all who pass.
There with a friend reclining for a rest,
Fair loving eyes might please a spirit blest.
While still these raptures of a moment's glee,
'Tis heaven grants, intending them for thee!
Then Nature smiles, and think not angels scorn,
They know that you were once of woman born.

But now of other wrongs she will complain;
We here must soar to catch a higher strain.

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She is not what herself at first she knew;
That she is fallen is what she feels but true.
She loathes the sophists who her ills conceal,
And to her sickly self make sole appeal.
There are who hold all impulses are good,
When Nature fallen is not understood.
They call her rights what then are her own wrongs;
This error reigns in schools, in books, in songs.
And then to every side though men may turn,
Nature their praises and their thoughts will spurn.
Oh, call not natural the base and vile,
That pleases self and others will beguile!
Whatever scoffs and specious words you find,
There lies the false and true Satanic mind.
Nature alone, without her white-robed friend,
Religion named, will have a bitter end.
To think that one is good without the other,
Is the true vital spark in man to smother.
Religion without Nature is a ghoul,
That in dim vaults will sometimes glare and prowl.
But Nature godless, left without a light,
From heaven strays and vanishes from sight,
Blinded, corrupted phantom of the brain,
And most of this poor Nature will complain.
For know, alone she never has been left,
Of God's own presence normally bereft.
In Eden even she could not rejoice,
If quite unheard were her Creator's voice.

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When fallen, banish'd, driven out on earth,
Amidst those wastes that feel the moral dearth,
Say, how could she be happy or exist,
If at her side her sole true friend were miss'd?
For who loves Nature, call it what you will,
But the great Being who sustains it still,
Surveying in its wishes and its thirst
His own great plan intended from the first?
Then well may Nature utter bitter cries
When any mortal such great truth denies.
This is the wrong that grieves her chief of all,
When proud false sages will ignore her fall.

Once more to lower things we take our way,
And a wide field of grief for her survey.
For now the evil will still more expand,
Till with its plague it covers all the land.
For what with censures boundless and unjust,
And praises showing blind excessive trust,
True Nature seems on all sides now betray'd,
A scarecrow first, and then a sham word made.
Banish'd from life on one or other ground,
Her voice unheard, her presence never found,
Where she is then most needed to supply
Of flesh and spirit the deficiency;
The first, without her, lawless, blind, and vile,
The latter but a phantom to beguile.
The grief of Nature is the grief of all,
Whom false religion and base lust appal!
Let Nature still throughout the world be near,
Then neither will create a ground of fear.

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Religion, pure from the fanatic's fire,
With all the sweets that goodness can inspire,
The simple, manly, generous, and free,
Opposed to all that "liberal" would be
In name alone, while narrow, selfish, low,
With nothing but pretension that can grow,
Such soon would be the consequences then,
Of seeing Nature on the paths of men.

But mark with me minutely in detail,
How without Nature all bright things must fail.
See what becomes of every human state,
When a divorce like this is made its fate.
Order, disorder, civil life and arms,
Each loses bliss or shows increase of harms.
War without Nature loses chivalry,
Begets a name, like some, of infamy.
Law grows inhuman, pagan, and unjust,
Bend to it even God and goodness must.
Art too itself looks spectral, dull and cold,
Thinking to seize what never can be told,
Disdaining even beauty as a blot,
And wild abstractions, nothing real, not.
As if alone what's bloodless to the eye
Can purest criticism now defy,
As if the grace of infancy in Art
Were all that skill instructed should impart;
Though he of Fiesoli, the blessèd man,
Would not have counted Nature in his ban.

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He painted minds; his bodies merely show
The want of what more skill can now bestow
On men who wish to imitate the pure,
Without neglecting other things as sure;
Though now some artists, when they try to please,
From system banish Nature and all ease.
Nature too mourns that states of life the best
Can seldom find their dignity confess'd.
What can be nobler than the painter's art,
Which such exalted visions can impart?
What is more gentle, lofty, and refined,
Than to be occupied with what you find
Smiling in landscape, fair in human faces,
Showing in form and colour all the graces
Which tend to humanize the noble soul,
And to great beauty's law subject the whole?
Yet if you'll hear a lisp that means aggression,
Art cannot be a liberal profession!
We're told that artists are not found to show
What education first-rate will bestow,
Such as great lawyers have at their command,
When in high circles they familiar stand.
Perhaps they mean the art of idle prattle,
Of worldly ladies, uttering tittle-tattle;
Yes, they are wanting in the power to sneer
Away sweet visions or the starting tear.
Art in their drawing-rooms should never stay,
When men will talk and all thought fling away.
All this I understand, and laugh the while;
But I am shock'd when people grave beguile,

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Taking for granted when for fame they start
They have a right to scorn and cry down Art.
But all this flows from one dull poison'd source,
When pride, not genius, is the last resource;
Pride, a mere phantom without blood, a spirit
Blighting souls and withering all merit.
What dismal mockery to make Art yield
To any studies in another field—
Legal, scientific, diplomatic,
Even moral or gravest metaphysic;
As if the bar, or any other station,
Were nobler in a wise man's estimation
Than the sweet study to present the sight
With Nature in her loveliness or might,
Or show in colours to the ravish'd eye
The way men soar to immortality.
To feel the beauty of a landscape fair,
Is to be tranquil as the summer air.
Such taste inflames and purifies the mind,
Making it noble, innocent, and kind.
See Vernet like a mad youth on the beach,
When first the ocean can his pencil teach,
Resisting all the efforts of his guide
To tear him from the rock where he would bide
Until he painted all that glorious sight,
Of Marseille heedless, and the coming night.
There was a spirit and a genial fire
To win all hearts and gentle thoughts inspire.
So it is too with Stanfield, Claude, Patell,
With countless others who show this as well.

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To paint like Leslie light of setting suns,
Is not the part of him who madly runs
Through the dull thickets of a worldly way,
While heedful only of what's sure to pay.
Think you when man or woman are Art's end,
Elsewhere true greatness must its pupils send?
When Hogarth shows us vice at every stage,
He yields to neither poet nor to sage
That ever learnèd tenderly to scan
The fond sad frailties of deluded man.
Mark his rake's vacant yet expressive face;
You learn a lesson time can ne'er efface.
He shows you Folly's end, no feeling near;
You shudder awe-struck, but you drop a tear.
Shall Art be still consider'd as below
What funds, or lands, or titles can bestow?
Then Shakspeare too would be beneath the squire,
Peer, Knight, or M.P., all whom we admire,
His station not acknowledged in May Fair,
But people wondering, how he could get there.
Will Nature weep or laugh at such conceits?
Mere scornful silence best her feeling meets.
Then sweet calm scenes of life, though homely, low,
When shown by Art, can nobleness bestow.
Le Nain, two brothers, painters of the poor,
Have left a name that ever will endure.
They sung the life of peasants without guile,
Word not too lyric to describe their style;
And all who, like them, choose to paint the low,
Heedless of what the mighty can bestow,

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Must, says their critic, love them from the heart[3];
And say what grandeur does not that impart?
To feel the beauty of the human face,
Is with intensest glow to love our race;
To paint like Raphael, is to feel and love
In some degree as angels there above.
For what's the end of Art upon the whole?
'Tis beauty seen but with the eyes of soul.
Then when the artist shows us what is grand
In story old, our hearts are at command.
While, highest flight of all, and quite divine,
Is when on canvas he makes glory shine.
To paint like Herbert from the sacred page,
Is with its foes heroic war to wage;
Divinely too, not killing, but like breath,
To give them life and triumph over death.
Go now, compare the works of other men,
I pity him who will not answer then
In strict accordance with what Nature cries,
When those despising Art she loud defies.
Proclaiming too with statesmen deepest, best,
That Art in social balance stands the test;
Since human life no greater treasure knows,
Than what this "superfluity" bestows.
Ah well, a day there was, though now gone by,
When Nature for this cause had not to sigh.
A king would stoop to pick up from the ground
The artist's pencil, with his courtiers round.

[3] Champ Fleury, Les frères Le Nain.

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In royal carriage, which while far he meets,
Vernet the painter enters Paris streets.
Till stars and orders shone upon the breast
Of Spanish artists kings had not then rest.
No state or dignity in all the land
Had higher honours ever at command.
True faith gives way, and Nature then departs
With all due honour for the noblest arts.
'Tis not that men from pedant bonds have burst,
By prizing Nature's paintings always first,
Seeing God's master-pieces day by day,
Though only Ruysdaël, Van der Doës will pay;
But that the sense of colour and of lines
Is lost where sordid profit only shines.
So now we must respond to Nature's wail,
Where briefs, reports, and blue-books will prevail,
When beauty, goodness, and all sacred truth
Are term'd the idle talk of dreaming youth.
Then too the graver men to whom we owe
Recover'd health are treated even so.
To aid the sick by dearly purchased skill,
Is not deem'd half so glorious as to kill.
What, glorious! nonsense! they are e'en despised,
Although they give us what is chiefly prized,
Sharing with God in man's ingratitude,
When obligation basely we elude.
How can such groundless prejudices reign,
And Nature not revolt and loud complain?
But all this while the social life of each,
Left without Nature, can this lesson teach,

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Re-echoing of Nature the long wail,
When all her gifts to man are seen to fail.

To social life, to those gay scenes I turn,
With love of which most harmless bosoms burn.
For what more consonant with kind and fair,
Than thus for friends quite freely to repair,
To taste the sweets of common conversation,
Such as adorneth every polish'd nation?
To meet the stranger or familiar guest,
Who will not speed at times on such a quest?
Alas! the end is sure to prove most vain
Wherever Nature feels she should complain.
The world! society! oh here you'll see
In little things of man the vanity.
The world and Nature are still bitter foes,
As every one that feels and sees well knows.
The lights may burn and doors be open'd wide,
The trinkets, dresses, glitter on each side,
No end of company the rooms to fill,
But all is stiff and awkward, lonely still.
No ease, no freedom, nothing hearty, warm,
While with acquaintances the house may swarm.
Each like the other, pour'd as from one mould,
Alike monotonous and formal, cold.
No character in one unlike the other,
For individuality you smother.
How jolly that! for those who would survey
Life's sweet variety in grave and gay!

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But what is worse—as if insane were all—
No ease at feast, or music, or the ball;
A form—a tasteless waste of time or strength,
The dull reception wears out all its length,
Till wearied, full of envy, perhaps hate,
The jaded crowd withdraw in wonted state.
Poor Nature you have banish'd. Be content,
This is what follows when she's elsewhere sent.
This is what follows when you rash exceed,
And make exceptions for all youth a need.
Because for caverns some have no vocation,
These must become the "fastest" of the nation!
Because retreat protracted rather tires,
They must indulge extravagant desires;
No simple, noble, honest virtues left,
Of all such manners these must be bereft!
To deserts some would drive you, it is said;
Then your new worldliness be on their head.
How should not Nature raise an angry voice,
When some pretend they have no other choice?
Is there no medium between silent dells
And the loud vortex where mad fashion swells;
Unbending wills which feelings all disown,
Or dissipation boundless, reckless grown?
Because in truth for your poor humble part,
You've no vocation for the stony heart,
Must you crush Nature in another style,
And do exactly what the wise revile?
Fashion is Nature—part of social truth,
By providence inspired in our youth.

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For how would industry itself be curb'd,
If that gay reign were not each year disturb'd?
All dresses would be ancestral and old,
Nothing be made, for nothing could be sold.
These changes, therefore, to a thoughtful mind
Bespeak the will of Nature, ever kind.
But fashions costly that prevent the course
Of social bonds exceeding all resource,
Are your inventions, graceless, jealous minds,
In whom her deadly foes poor Nature finds;
Unlike the great of old, of whom 'tis said,
Their woman's type bore pitcher on her head,
Stiff creatures all of jewels and of lace,
Blind to the contours of a lovely face,
Thinking all lines of beauty should be hid,
And trying of sweet Nature to get rid;
Foes to all just equality, and worse,
To man himself, things meriting his curse.
O Nature, how thou often art defied,
And all the beauty of thy ways denied!
From sweet religion exiled first, and then
From homes and all domestic life of men!
But it was said when she is sent elsewhere,
These dismal consequences follow there.
Elsewhere, then answer, is she ever found,
Within our reach upon the British ground?
Oh yes, my friend, she's not grown quite ideal,
Amidst the poor, unknown, her life is real.
For uttering this at me pray have your fling,
I have to back me both a saint and king.

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And how your taunts should wound, I cannot see,
When aiming at what graced the fleur-de-lis,
That shield symbolic and that glorious crown
Immortal, though some silly pedants frown.
For holy Louis, monarch of fair France,
This very fact disdain'd not to advance,
When with an English king his grieving heart
He oped, and did what wounded it impart.
"For look," he said, "had we been common men,
In lowly life connected, how loved then
Had been our wives' relations, whom to see
Would be beholding one dear family.
In humble life we had been ever blest,
In love reciprocal, enjoying rest."
How sweet to hear a thought of those old times
Which with your vulgar language never chimes!
But such is still the manner of the low,
Who suffer Nature with themselves to grow.
No murmurs there, she utters with a sigh,
Provoked by witnessing men's vanity.
There she's still found—so fair, so passing sweet,
Where hearts, not bodies only, come to meet.
There with a nobler friend she stands in view,
I mean Religion which is pure and true.
Mark but the faces of the poor and low,
Where in believing lands they both will grow,
Yea, mark them where the country may disown
Both—yet still powerless to change the tone
Of those whose hearts are nathless ever free
To feel the charm of Catholicity.

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No affectation there—no lurking pride,
Nature's sweet beauties all to veil and hide;
True, she may suffer; but, O sages stern,
How much from Nature, love, and faith to learn!
No murmurs, vague regrets, or fear of death,
Content and cheerful to their latest breath,
No suicidal murders here ensue—
Those Cato-like conclusions are for you!

Dear Nature, gracious, sweet, indulgent mother,
Oh, take me, clasp me, and with kisses smother!
Open, O friend obscure, thy humble door,
I find what's sought, in overflowing store.
For truth, and love, and goodness without show,
Are what your lowly dwelling can bestow.
The smile, the words so frank, the laugh, the jest,
The arch rejoinder from the happy breast,
The bold expression of an honest heart,
Which can restrain, and modesty impart:
These are the jewels that will glitter here,
Though only glass and copper may appear.
Religion, conscience, and the common sense
Of those whose lives are all without pretence,
Embrace poor Nature here, and will remain;
You never more will find her to complain.
Friend, now believe, let ranks be what they may,
Here is where happiness and goodness stay;
Yes, let us end without excluding classes
From this bright type of life which all surpasses.

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That which shows Nature left with truth and God,
Docile and free, submissive to His nod,
O marriage blest and holy, past all thought,
Where Faith and Nature are together brought!
There hand in hand these two will haunt a bower,
Which proves 'gainst all our foes of strength a tower.
For do your best, and Nature is still strong
To 'venge her just cause when you do her wrong.
See in the reign of plants, whate'er you boast,
How you are but her servants at the most.
If in her sense you labour, all is well,
She aids, rewards, and will her secrets tell;
But if, capricious, with your system vain
You try to thwart her—she will not complain:
No, she is sovereign, absolute, as God,
Chimeras she disperses with a nod:
If you deceive her, or disdain her rules,
Sterility will crown the work of fools.
Nor is it only gardens feel her sway;
The world knows much of her mysterious way:
Man she confounds when most his might is great,
While foolish sophists think it all is fate.
See how she plays with you in outward form,
While needing but a flood, a night, a storm[4].
When Nature plays a part, then man is small,
Cæsar or Pompey, fleets or armies all!
A fall of rain and cannon come too late,
Some explain by this Napoleon's fate.

[4] Ste. Beuve.

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September, on an eve past long ago,
Saw rising waves and heard a tempest blow:
That wind by night, upon its second day[5],
Reversed the whole order of the world's sway.
'Tis so in morals. Let but Nature cry,
No force on earth but you can then defy;
While needing but a look, a sign, a breath,
To vanquish power and to smile at death.
So when Religion is with her allied,
Adieu all schemings with their might and pride.
See them united! What a mystic pair,
Dauntless, yet soft, in every feature fair!
There's soul with all its native dignity;
There's flesh and blood with immortality.
There's earth transform'd, lit up with beams of love,
There's heaven's brightness shining from above.
There's man for ever noble, ever young,
Heroic more than ever yet was sung.
For union such as this produces youth,
The world its stage: the air it breathes, the truth.
O Paradise regain'd! while here below
With you, with me, O friend, may it be so!
Then we shall wander and shall sport with ease,
With nothing wrong to injure or displease;
Life—the enjoyment of a creature pure,
Death—but its pass to bliss that will endure:
Where human nature sits enthroned above,
For endless ages, with the endless love.

[5] 1588.

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JOHN GERALD.

JOHN GERALD, holy truant boy,
Alas! how soon thou fled'st away,
Enticing with thee all our joy;
At least we thought so, and did say,
When first with us we saw thee not,
As if all others were forgot.

Eight summers thou didst stay on earth,
Without one fault that we could see;
An angel, spotless from thy birth,
Didst thou appear and prove to me.
I think thou fleddest while a child,
Through fear thy youth might be beguiled.

For thou didst love me all too well,
And that alone had proved a snare;
For careless ways would cast a spell
To wound thy spirit pure and rare;
And so thou didst expand thy wing,
And leave me here to mourn and sing.

Come, I will now recall thee here,
And think that thou art with us still;
Methinks I see thee playing near,
And wishing ever to fulfil

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What thou dost owe to God and others,
Father, mother, sisters, brothers,

Friends, and strangers, and all you know,
For thou didst love the human race,
And wouldst a smile or gift bestow,
On all of whom you saw the face;
Unless, by instinct taught, you fear'd
Where pride in any one appear'd.

Thou wert a proof, upon the whole,
Of what Tertullian said so bold,
That Christian is the human soul
By nature, whether young or old.
And so instinctively our law
Practised and loved in thee we saw.

Yes, far beyond our songs each grace,
That, dew-like, first fell on the Mount,
Has left to be adored a trace,
Bright flowing limpid from thy fount.
No saint in cloister ever bred
Would alter what by thee is said,

And practised too with all thy strength
While age ashamed could only say,
No years prolong'd to any length
A truer worship e'er could pay,
Or show what ransom'd man can be,
Who breathes for immortality.

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Yet, or rather therefore believe,
No child you ever saw is more
Replete with what can ne'er deceive—
The gifts which even men adore ;
Those gifts of body and of soul,
Which make one grand composite whole.

For, chivalrous as noblest men,
Thy heart was high, thy courage strong,
And penetrating was thy ken
To spurn whate'er is base and wrong.
Thou wouldst have proved a good true knight,
For God and justice aye to fight.

But why now make thy spirit sad,
Alluding thus to war's sad field?
Heaven-inspired thou wert, a lad
For all the sweets that love can yield.
Bathed in that ocean thou didst float,
O'er waves on which the angels dote.

So tastes refined, while yet a child,
Were thine in abundant measure;
Music and painting, manner mild,
Poesy, beauty, thou didst treasure ;
The eye, the ear, the hand, all made,
Later to cast some in the shade.

But who could paint that blissful mirth,
That arch, responsive cordial style,

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Which we might say had from thy birth
So served to charm us and beguile,
When thou didst play, and talk, and sing,
Like some unearthly fairy thing?

Pray come, oh come then, once again,
Resume thy joyful games below,
The angels never will complain,
When thou wilt once more wander so.
At Ramsgate, Tunbridge, where thou wilt—
Oh come, and they will see no guilt.

But no! the thought appals my soul!
She feels that from thee she must sever;
On earth again thou mayst not stroll,
Thou! fled from earth and gone for ever!
'Twas fancy utter'd the fond cry,
The soul those wishes did deny!

In our affections human, fond,
There is an unctuous vapour thick,
You might now say to correspond
With smoke emerging from a wick.
We use that for those living here,
Bound with us still in life and near.

But there's another, vital, pure,
Analogous to torch's flame,
Ethereal, that will aye endure,
Although here feeding still the same.

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We keep that for those pass'd away
In brightness lost of endless day.

Besides, what would it be to thee
  In tiny boat to row or sail?
What in the furze to hide with me,
  Or listen to the winter's tale?
To thee who now canst heaven survey,
With mirthful angels sing and play?

What would be now thy sister's strain,
  When playing sweetly as of old,
When there above she will remain,
  And sing the songs that can't be told?
There play with her and have your spree,
The happier since away from me.

Fly then—near hovering do not stay;
  Soar to thy summits past the sky;
From memory even haste away;
  Thou shouldst not hear our quick short sigh.
I only sought to leave a trace
On earth of thy triumphant race.

Too short we call'd it in our folly,
  But what are years when all is gain'd?
Or where's the food for melancholy,
  If then no other part remain'd
But there to taste the bliss above,
When time is not, and life is love?

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THE MEETING OF THE WAYS.

A YOUTH, like most others when now years began
To prompt the reflection of thoughtful man,
Felt there was something still far and beyond
All the bright objects of which he was fond.

And he loved past words whatever he saw,
In life and nature; and yet he would draw
Conclusions most vain, lame and impotent,
To reach where his high aspirations went.

He thought there must be some wonderful spring,
Or power existing, wherewith to wing
His mind to find out a centre of rest,
Where all things prove good, or better, or best.

But to find what he sought the way seem'd barr'd,
And so each fresh prospect was always marr'd,
Till it chanced one day with a friend he stroll'd,
And open'd his bosom and all this told.

It was in the forest of Saint Germain,
In sight the blue sparkling waves of the Seine;
That friend too like himself in youth had known
The want for which beauty could not atone.

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He bade him confide and open his heart,
Thinking the while how he best could impart
Some lesson that suited the scene around,
Picturesque if you will, but not less sound.

That forest so ancient is dark and wild,
Its depths may well startle a modern child,
Since even the Normans, of old so stout,
Used rather than pierce it to ride about.

Its silent gloom would have caused them dismay,
And so they chose always some other way,
When, bent to win glory, they sought to kill
All who resisted their terrible will.

But now Christian times had long roll'd o'er
The woods that were changed quite since those of yore.
An instance is here; for in the centre,
On whatever side the shades you enter,

The roads now converge all about a pile,
Which can be seen on them many a mile,
An old sacred pile for some holy rite,
Which at least on highways is still in sight;

The by-ways will bend, but then ever near
Are the roads on which it will fresh appear.
Well now, I sing this desponding youth,
Still busy with love of perfection and truth.

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So he told of the things that grieved his heart,
Of all that he liked, finding wants in part,
Till at length it was time to make reply,
And this now the other resolved to try

By suiting his words to a rambling boy,
And making the forest itself yield joy.
Sir knight, he said gaily, I've heard you tell
What from experience I know but too well.

Come, let us rest from a purposeless walk,
And then in return just please hear me talk.
But look first before you or else around,
An emblem of your condition is found.

For it has proved like the dark and wild wood,
In which all the while a bright column stood,
To guide your stray steps, whether slow or fast,
Where what you kept seeking is found at last.

For long you were seeking with weary wing
What could all to greatest perfection bring,
At least just so far as our fancy can
Suggest it at present to mortal man.

Your course is an Odyssey; you seek home,
Even when farthest and from it you roam,
On a wild quest for the fountain of youth,
Which is really found at central truth;

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Baffled and fretted you follow your way,
And lost still the more the farther you stray,
Demanding perhaps from men lost as well,
If they the right road can point out and tell.

From thicket to thicket you turn your eyes,
And still every where some obstruction lies,
To favour the evil and check the good,
Which both by your mind are well understood.

As if they ought not to baffle our skill,
If only means could be found with a will
To favour the flower and push back the weed
To the depths that agree with its pestilent seed.

But still, wanting clues, you lost even hope,
Trying your way through the darkness to grope,
While thorns or branches around you would bend,
As if in a cage your course were to end.

See these long roads by which hither we came;
To each there belongs some historic name,
Persons denoting, or else conditions,
To which each past age has made additions.

While all these old highways entitled so,
To that one bright centre are found to go.
And then not alone are there vistas wide,
But dark by-paths that the centre will hide,

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When any one chooses a desert wild,
Leaving the roads where he's never beguiled.
Through our life now, like the forest as well,
Are main roads in number more than we tell,

With by-ways in plenty, on which who speeds
Finds roots that will trip him, and tangled weeds;
The by-paths made by men's foolish desire,
Whose lost errant steps will soon or late tire.

The main ways you owe to the wise old will
Which, heeding wants common, provides them still
To each of these great lines for every eye
A name we can give for all who pass by.

Just as each of us has his own special vocation,
Some well-known public or private station,
To follow the course that's mark'd out for him
By birth or duty, or even his whim,

As highways or paths they all may be good,
When as means of passing beyond understood;
But he who should take them for end of the way,
Simply for ever must feel gone astray.

But still all the while there lies in his view,
Through each fresh vista appearing anew,
A centre that's common to all and each,
Which those who are guided can easily reach,

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Where they will find what so long has been sought
By those whose feelings respond to your thought,
That somewhere there must be a fresh clear spring,
Of what is most perfect for every thing

That mankind has studied or still will follow,
From which not to draw strength will lead to sorrow.
Then what is that fountain? you now will ask;
'Tis like calling out "question" Nature's task—

Not of necessity hostile to song,
Since to the Muses did ever belong
The forests so deep and the fountains clear,
And the vistas through which can oft appear

Their bright sparkling wave and the verdure sweet,
For our singing on high themes always meet.
To the head of the stream where Naiads play,
The Muses at least will not bar the way.

My friend then, I say, this fountain is light,
Descending mysterious on every wight
Who lives in the pale of the one true fold
That shelters men now as in days of old.

The old well-known faith is the source for all,
For the wise and simple, the great and small,
To draw thence refreshment for each long way
That they would wend on or only survey.

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It sounds or murmurs where'er we stroll;
Beneath the tall trees its echoes roll,
Till by instinct at times many are led
To follow its voice to the crystal head.

It glides or filters, pure virginal stream,
Through channels mysterious oft as a dream;
From it there issues medicinal breath,
Reviving what seem'd but to droop to death.

Arrived at the source the wilderness glows
With a beauty that there majestic grows.
'Tis shaded by branches it makes to bend,
Where at last all our thirst can find its end.

Here is the true centre of life's wild wood,
As if some great pillar had long there stood,
Mystical focus denoting repose,
And yet from which constantly motion grows.

But that which, immoveable, moves the rest,
Of all motive powers is sweetest, best;
'Tis like that which God imparts to the world;
Alone this presents its titles unfurl'd.

For rest such as this, which can all things move,
Must clearly its own divinity prove.
But hear me, I pray, in minute detail,
Just as each condition will tell its tale.

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Mark first, then, how sunbeams are shedding round
Beauty and fragrance on brightest deck'd ground;
For violets, learn, are always most sweet,
When you surprise them sly hiding from heat.

No dark shades yet in the forest are spread;
At skirts of a wood there's nothing to dread.
So here we begin our mystical flight,
By keeping the first steps of man in sight.

Say, then, you follow the road of the child;
Where old faith rules home, its manners are mild,
So free from every bad noxious leaven,
That thoughts, looks, and tastes all bespeak heaven.

You pass to the green way that's named from youth,
And there it will feed on congenial truth.
There blooms what's pleasing to God and to man;
Think what is fairer than this if you can.

Exceptions, of course, I know you may cite;
The rose may show canker—the blossom blight;
But say in candour, is partial the song,
On what to Catholic children belong,

Ascribing to smallest, and to the tall,
What more or less can be traced in them all,
A certain angelic, mystical air,
Such as cannot on earth be found elsewhere?

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But, doubtless, of genuine things I sing,
Not of mere neutrals, apt all doubts to bring,
Bats that are willing to creep or to fly,
According as they assent or deny.

Just as yet, however, no contrasts draw,
'Tis enough if each tells us what he saw.
Still skirting the forest will soon appear
The castle or home that's more lowly near.

Paths now in many directions are found,
That with clues to the centre still abound.
The road of the family first you take;
If this then through beds of roses you'd make,

It must receive manners, its air, and mould,
From what made so happy the homes of old.
If, says a poet, there's rapture in dreams,
Happiness flows not from what only seems.

'Tis from reality—as when you see
In families tender life's primal tree;
But that noble trunk requires a ground
Where waters of faith keep life all around.

Without them it withers, beginning on high,
At length lowest branches follow and die.
Domesticity's path keeps to this road,
As worn by feet that beside it strode.

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What vistas and signals are here in view,
If old mediæval records we knew!
Or even, if looking round us we see,
How loving, loyal, some servants can be!

While others abandon'd to meteor gleams,
Would lead us to think that these were mere dreams.
Henchmen, abigails, show all this quite clear,
And on their own track the truth must appear.

But families have their traditions old,
And to faith you're guided when these are told.
For either the glory is solid, true,
Or else they are blots they keep in their view.

With saints then for ancestors, no one tries
To palm off for gold what glitters to eyes;
While blots only prove the error of those
Who yesterday's folly old truth suppose.

Where you can trace genealogy high,
The old Christian faith you needs must pass by;
And wilful, wanton, methinks he must be,
Who sources for nobles would elsewhere see.

Heralds, too, know that their science is vain,
If the old faith be not there to explain
What lies in its symbols so quaint and high,
Which men left without it cannot descry.

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Then free hospitality, noble and true,
Points to the centre from roads you pursue.
'Tis elsewhere often mere want of a guest,
To yield to some epicure needful zest;

Or, what is still worse, some pompous display,
The wise question's answer, "What will they say?"
But taste the Apostle seeks to impart,
Bounty all springing from faith and the heart,

Having for motive religion so pure,
Knowing that this too is meant to endure—
Flows sole from the fountain that takes its rise,
Where every sly, selfish passion dies.

So manners belonging to hall and board,
To houses with all things for loved guests stored,
Are never so perfect, so simply sound,
As when the same old faith has till'd the ground.

Then again yielding a path to the great,
Who with delicate feelings crown their state,
A vista is seen through some rocks most grand,
That seem the forest to have at command.

Yet here full of perils we know the way,
Even when on the gain'd summit you stay.
Illusions while standing web o'er the ground,
The steps may be false ones, the falls profound.

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For honour, stem of the family tree,
However in praising it most men agree,
Will never yield fruit so wholesome and fair,
When all you can show is how much you dare,

And unless there hangs on it mystic fire,
Which the old lamp can maintain and inspire.
But now your steps lead through a darker wood—
The growing perils of life understood;

For mothers and children have here to part;
'Tis elsewhere men will instruction impart.
Pale students, too, pass by the verdant way,
You know from what places they hither stray;

So home you must leave, and repair to schools,
And faith you soon find supplies the best rules
To ward off all that would poison and bind
The energies pure of nature and mind.

Next we come to a road from travellers named;
For farther still rove some who would be famed.
'Tis distance they seek, all lands to explore;
No longer on books scholastic they'll pore;

They'll pass o'er the seas and learn to scan
Whatever can interest the modern man.
So now like a bird you will take your flight
To countries that lie far beyond your sight;

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Yet there, too, you find that faith is the guide
Which best can direct through the world so wide,
Imparting an object, an aid, and will,
The best, the surest, most rational still.

For, absent that guide, how interest is lost
In spots where by chance you find yourself toss'd;
How every motive will shortly fail,
While hatred of rest will only prevail!

And pray by what magic canst find the means
To wing all thy steps, whate'er intervenes?
To have even wishes places to see,
To faith not more dear than to poetry?

Oh, what a contrast has Palestine seen,
Some so exalted and others so mean,
Volney, Brown, Niebuhr, Mariti, Vanzow—
Chateaubriand, believing, led by his vow!

An Englishman squire, of little faith type,
May visit Rome, but 'tis all to shoot snipe;
For him Peter and Paul in vain lie there,
He goes protesting, indeed, not for prayer.

In Paris, so fruitful in faith, some see
Only those hating all divinity;
They see just what journals told them before,
And, travell'd, they wish now to see no more.

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As when through a gap some one sheep has pass'd,
The rest will all follow down to the last.
Then elsewhere, though interests can't be so deep,
If faith be not burning, genius will sleep.

Centrifugal travellers keep their way,
So where they should halt they never will stay,
And where they should hasten with speed of fire,
'Tis there above all that they never tire.

Now rural impressions give names to roads,
Where those who love Nature seek their abodes.
Oh, what peace, what vistas of truth are here,
Whene'er to the centre your steps draw near!

Would you delight in woods, mountains, and fields?
Embellish'd are all by what Faith still yields,
Raising up structures the old and new,
Shedding more beauty on all that you view.

Are you for hearing the hounds and the horn?
You think of St. Hubert in old times born,
You think of the Huntsman fierce and so wild,
Contrast him with others, holy and mild.

The hunter's road, therefore, is not bereft
Of footsteps to guide you upon it left,
When you ponder the crimes of cruel men,
And contrast them with those who suffer'd then.

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The one, examples of loud defiance,
The other, of central soft reliance:
For thus, once for all you will find it here,
What's good to the centre approaches near;

While every form that causes dismay
Is sure still to take a different way.
But lo! a fresh road now before us lies,
Through charms producing each moment surprise.

The vistas so blue, the glens and the slopes,
With sylvan delight can nourish our hopes,
That somewhat, though distant and still unknown,
Of good past all thought will soon be our own.

The road takes its name from those who know best
Where is the fountain of true mental rest.
For here we come to the title of poet
Inscribed in the green shade, and we know it,

That this chequer'd way to our faith must lead,
From which the true masters never recede,
All fed as they must be by what is true,
Howe'er empoison'd the game they pursue;

As Dryden and Shakspeare, Pope, and the rest,
Who stand still the first, can clearly attest;
With Chaucer, Massinger, Shirley, and more,
Of whom we in England have plenteous store.

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Pope's faults protrude upon many a page,
But them you trace to the mind of the age.
Your only surprise is how he was free
So oft from its sceptic philosophy.

And when with deep faith he expands his wings,
Oh, most it is then that he nobly sings.
To Dryden himself the same words apply,
Explaining the cause of his misery;

While Shakspeare's peerless and Catholic song
Has only faults that to Nature belong—
Nature that we at least cannot but love,
Not soaring always like angels above.

In poets who dream a different creed,
Or no creed at all, I must beg you heed,
That what makes them true bards is not no belief,
But the fire from which they oft seek relief.

Briefly, in Pagan or modern times,
There can be no poet whose verse ne'er chimes
With truth of religion, truth of the soul,
However he hopes t'escape from the whole.

Homer, Euripides, Sophocles too,
Æschylus, as in our school-days we knew,
Virgil and Horace, sweet Ovid as well,
Exemplify all this and plainly tell.

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And as in those old times, so it is still,
When view things distinctly and rightly you will,
Muses in all times are ever so shy
To favour opponents who faith deny.

For faith had the Gentiles, at least in part,
A fact which Apostles themselves impart;
To our centre still those beauties belong,
Which have made immortal their noblest song.

So if Byron and Wordsworth, Shelley and Scott
Were poets inspired, it clearly was not
That they contradicted the light from high,
But that to it they so often came nigh.

When near it, to all men pleasing the more,
When far, leaving stanzas all must deplore;
While ever most free from stain of defect,
When showing no trace of any false sect

Sophistic, religious, or a mere whim,
Which bright central truth could pervert and dim.
But now you see looming a strange dark rock,
With dim ghost-like forms that scare and shock!

Oh, hark to the moans and the clank of chains,
Behold what deep horror around us reigns!
Phantoms that beckon—I see you tremble,
Pale like themselves—you try to dissemble.

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Yet you seem riveted, bound to the spot,
As if further search for truth were forgot.
Romance thus attracts you with mighty spell,
Though why or on what ground no one can tell,

Till you come to the faith which shines as a star,
To guide your poor feet from Thessaly far,
By showing you where lies the safe true end,
For which men their genius so often will spend,

When wanting the clue to lead them still right,
'Midst spectres and sorcerers dim in night,—
Which still consists in the old Christian creed,
Where false foolish miracles you won't need.

From paths strewn with novels I see you turn,
And needing no guidance to bid you spurn
The ways of an age that bends down so low,
Where nought more fragrant or lovely can grow.

And yet I ne'er doubt this hollow bare field
Could now a centripetal light still yield.
But mark far distant is Dickens's fire,
Which much that's glorious and true can inspire.

But now other thoughts will our minds employ,
As we come to the road that's named from joy.
For here we have proof it leads like the rest,
To where gladness finds food the liveliest, best.

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There is no other sprightly and bland,
But that which implies how you understand
By joy the pleasure that's always combined
With truth and sweet goodness deep in the mind.

"To his own conscience the nearest of men"
Proves to be always the merriest then:
Expression but borrow'd, I pray you note,
Though knowing before I can only quote.

Clear brightness and joy of truth are allies,
Needing *the certain* which sadness defies;
Sadness arises from doubts in the mind,
Not knowing whether the way it can find.

Joy needs an element grave in the cup,
If surface that sparkles you would fill up;
Order and discipline, Catholic ways—
Where all these are found, it frolics and stays;

But root out these germs in whole or in part,
And no more amusement will please your heart;
Though eyes you may close, a spectre will stand,
Telling you joys you have not at command.

Try to amuse yourself each day and hour,
Bitter dull sadness your life will devour.
Man is amusable only so long
As life is harmonious, a flight and song.

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Behold the strong contrasts. Who are most gay?
Who can enjoy best a bright holiday?
Those who press on to the centre in view,
Or those who its vistas will not pursue?

All the dull arts that the latter employ,
Seem aim'd but to chill or put out your joy;
What are e'en fair ones with tempers uncheck'd,
But witches from whom you cannot expect

Any thing better than pent-in wild fire,
Fearing to lose aught if you they should tire?
Joy with the innocent only is found,
And innocence tends straight to holiest ground.

If joy be the object you seek to gain,
"Here we are all," as the song saith, "again;"
Expression most happy—study each word,
Classical, clear, and by no means absurd.

But men are such pedants now, every day
We must stand on our guard where'er we stray.
Well, now branches off a fresh fragrant road,
Where piety popular has abode.

Just cast your eyes upwards; that ancient tree
Yields guidance immediate that all can see.
For there, high on its trunk so vast and hoary,
Stands the image that shines through Christian
story;

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'Tis the figure of Mary, to which bow
Those who pass to the centre humbly now.
Will you still thread darkness and leave it there,
And cry out 'gainst thraldom, without a prayer?

Alas! that the poor should ever be free
From the sweet blissful bonds that here you see!
The chaplet, bent knee, the low-murmur'd sigh,
With hearts corresponding—all these are nigh.

If such you admire and still would retain,
It is the old faith that them will maintain;
Banish it, and you find to your trouble,
That what you think solid is but a bubble.

For nations unbelieving that never pray,
Have sometimes a sudden and awkward way
Of kicking off rich men, the great and wise,
With the old social ties, which each denies.

While for the people there can be no love,
Where they think never of Heaven above;
Or where they think proudly with face demure,
Like some I need name not, fanatics pure.

Now we come to a road from churches call'd,
From which some will turn as if appall'd;
And yet, these piles hoary, why be so cold,
As to disdain what's so solemn and old?

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But no one, I believe, is quite so obtuse
As not to discern what is their true use.
No altar is wanted, no aisles, no fire,
If wanting be faith that still can inspire

The persons who would, as in days of yore,
Employ them, while finding yet somewhat more,
To make them revere that tender strong will
To which we owe things so beautiful still—

Constructions breathing the lofty and kind,
Both apt and congenial for each good mind,
Heeding the poorest man coming to prayer,
As well as the king who kneels with him there.

But churches are beacons to guide with fire,
And statesmen themselves profess to admire
Publicity, worship, and high visions seen,
With customs of life sidereal between.

Bells, music, chants, incense, and days of fast,
All these things they say should never be past—
Thoroughly wise, as important as old,
Their useful effects could never be told.

These are more needful to men and to states,
Than all our reforms and all our debates.
Religion is fire; but hid with a screen,
Animal, sensual shades intervene.

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And what then becomes of the Christian light,
Which in Catholic churches shines so bright?
Yes, Joubert may soar with a poet's wing,
But his grave flight points to the central spring.

The artist's sweet road now leads us along,
No theme much fitter for music and song;
While beauty in colour, proportion, lines,
Points plain to the centre where each still shines.

That can't be found at a different source,
Though to countless far springs you have recourse.
Alas! for the student of hideous things,
Who hies him to other and distant springs!

Of forms unlovely, waywardly fond,
Teaching beholders to fall and despond;
What raises Art if it be not the fire,
Moulding the scenes that rise higher and higher?

Where faith with true wisdom guides the skill'd hand,
Leaving three realms at the painter's command?
As when the artist of words show'd us clear,
How goodness and pride will one day appear.

Besides, of our life o'er each of the scenes,
High Art will still want some sure constant means
Of casting its spells to raise up the mind,
Spells with which faith will grow always entwined.

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For Art is like Nature—and to succeed,
Each more than Nature will certainly need.
The child even, sporting free in his play,
Will need from above some halo or ray,

Under the influence of the white three,
Faith first, and Hope too, and blest Charity;
While scenes of story require still more
A light from truths which old Christians adore.

But Art includes music with its great might,
And ears, too, will need what's wanted by sight;
Oh, path of musicians! how mystic, high
Are the sky-clad visions thou passest by!

Divine thy science, it dwells in the soul,
Others show parts, thou commandest the whole;
Rossini, lead on! still compose and dare,
To Heaven thou speedest—thy art is there.

For death thou wilt find but a change of ground,
Where thy conceptions with glory are found.
What can by music teach mortals to steal
Tones from above, heights of bliss to reveal,

If it be not that faith, so pure and high,
To shout the great triumph or prompt the sigh
Of mortals then thinking as seraphs think,
When their mind soars aloft or spirits will sink?

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Let Palestrina and still older song
Of the great Gregory, through ages long,
Direct austere hearts to the central view,
While Mozart and Haydn, and others new,

Convince the musicians who most excel,
That of these of this centre each must tell.
Music, when winging the soul thus to fly,
Directs to thoughts that throw open the sky,

Descending from thence to dwell with the fold,
Possessing true faith the same as of old.
But now to fresh tracks our steps we will turn,
On one of which hearts that are best oft burn.

See then that green glade lonesome through flowers,
Named you perceive from Love's fragrant bowers,
Where jessamine bright, and hyacinth pale,
And delicate lily, named from the vale,

Invite all fair creatures from early spring,
Their tributes of beauty and love to bring;
Can faith have admittance, aught to do here,
Where, gravity dull, all lovers must fear?

Quick, hold back the boughs, oh, let her enter,
Of true love below she is the centre—
'Tis faith that makes maidens soft as heaven,
'Tis faith that purifies man from leaven.

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No love where woman no worship has high
From Him who breathes constant the mystic sigh :
No true love where man is amerced of fire
That lights the soul which can goodness desire.

Love without God is mere selfishness, lust ;
In that let no one that's human e'er trust.
With God his links not wishing to sever,
'Tis charm past thought to last with him ever.

Faith is diminishing, some now will say ;
If so, on this earth will love longer stay ?
For answer just mark the proud one and jilt,
Or else he who woos her steep'd in worse guilt.

Oh, if Nature were left alone and pure,
Love by itself might remain and endure.
But, faith now departing, her place soon fills
With love's bitter foes, antagonist ills ;

So that in brief if the latter you choose,
You run a great risk the former to lose.
Leaving this solitude, here is a way
On which some companions right joyous stray,

The road of friends named, cold after the last,
Though somehow 'tis left with marks of the past ;
For love on this causeway right oft will steal,
And for both states the good clearly reveal.

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"Friend" is a synonym for lover used,
Fearing the latter word too much abused.
Truly the person who likes friendship's name
Has for safe guidance direction the same.

I know that for greeting many hear friend,
Whose steps the while fly to opposite end
From that which true faith still holds to the sight
Of those who boast of their own friendship's might.

But they who from system fear not to leave
The old true fold, must, whate'er they weave,
Be subject to passions that much deceive.
Trust, where these principles live not in man,
Is what no heart that's experienced e'er can.

The Light of the World dispels such trust hence,
'Tis interest or passion, or mere pretence;
For under this light none Pagans can be,
As facts can soon prove, though with mystery.

Pagans in vice you may be as of yore,
But Pagans in virtue, no, never more.
Friendship exists in full many a breast
That still wants the earnest of perfect rest;

But yet there is wanting, I know not why,
What union in faith can alone supply,
That something which makes of a friend a brother,
By a bond that passion can never smother,

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Not like the friendships of sophists so sure,
Which to their deaths could never endure.
From strangers the road will next take its name,
And here at least none will merit much blame,

When saying their interest and their true goal
Lie in the faith which makes so wide the soul,
That it will reckon all men its brothers,
Loving dear friends, yet strangers as others.

Stranger and enemy once meant the same;
The noblest of old were steep'd in this shame.
'Twas faith that from such notions gave release,
Of courtesy making a world and peace,

So far as faith ruled the nations of old,
As in all true ancient stories is told.
What means this new word, now shouted so loud,
Wherever faith ceases to guide the crowd—

Nationality, sooth, which claims to be
The privilege glorious of all lands free?
It means relapse to the old Pagan will,
With each to the other race most hostile still.

Then believe me, O stranger, wouldst find a home
Through whatever lands you will pass and roam,
Look to the faith which united once all,
And from that centre no nations e'er call.

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Now we descend to less lofty passes,
And named from those forming common classes.
To what do these owe their dignity, love,
Save to the faith which from God comes above?

Go and survey the old fate of poor man,
And then, bold, deny this fact if you can.
Lo, now, a change in the trees of the wood,
None growing here but for use understood.

Commerce and industry close at our side,
The fields of life active thus open wide;
In our times attractive with magic might,
The steps of all mortals they now invite.

On all these exist wants, aye, and still must,
Of a sure principle that men can trust.
And where can they find this safe steady rule,
Rejecting that of the Catholic school?

Which some will yet follow, seeing not roots
Whence still even all their honesty shoots.
Encouragement, justice, and a great end,
These on the old faith will ever attend.

Witness the cities of Italy old,
Florence and Venice, with Genoa bold;
Let London, too, speak with Whittington wise,
You have her "White Book," so apt to surprise.

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Hear Paris, then, in her records of trade,
See too still how prosperous all these were made,
Proclaiming at least that faith can inspire
The very same virtues merchants admire.

Who, sad, when like him that poets describe,
They sit, seem destined to sit with their tribe,
Ever unhappy [1], will see a light rise
That can even there charm their careworn eyes.

From workmen a paved way will now take name;
The centre you find is for them the same.
To what did free labour owe beginning?
To faith in all work as Heaven winning.

To what owes it still its true dignity,
Its calm, patient, active, and great mystery?
To faith which can in a carpenter see
Our Lord a poor 'prentice in Galilee.

Cancel that faith, and the slave will return,
With impotent rage his bosom will burn.
I know that our workmen forget this truth,
But there is the centre for lab'ring youth.

And truly I believe both the old and young
Have dim twilight thoughts may never be sung,
Inherited still from ages of old,
Though plainly by few this ever is told.

[1] "—— Sedet æternumque sedebit infelix."

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Now we arrive at direction more sure,
When taking the road that's named from the poor.
Oh, ye poor, by the world so fear'd and scorn'd,
What demon was by his master suborn'd

To veil the great faith which made each poor thing
Once honour'd and served as if 'twere a king,
Representing in person, abject, low,
God who can life everlasting bestow ?

The road passes buildings hoary with age,
Picturesque, mediæval, quaint, and sage,
Vast spacious halls, porches, works of high art,
Whatever can ease and solace impart;

Chapels so solemn and gardens so fair,
Images holy all smiling round there,
Attendants themselves, true saints, they're so kind,
Minist'ring angels—all this here you find,

Once founded by Princes in days of yore,
By Pontiffs or Abbots, or what's still more,
By some who had risen through labours long,
Who knew all the woes that to men belong.

Then passing farther, the castle's high home
Offers its shelter to poor men who roam.
From the rich man's gate the wretched one turns,
All grateful with love, and his bosom burns.

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Delicate feelings are stamp'd on his face,
For he has been used to look face to face
On those who are taught to treat him so well,
As in the high books which old manners tell.

And now when he's wearied with toilsome way,
He knows where to stop and where he can stay.
Sometimes to weddings invited as guest,
But always quite sure of a placid rest.

Hospitals, manners so kind, oh now speak;
Where is the centre for poor men to seek?
D'Esgrigny! of thee I never shall tire,
Nor of thy "rod" that's to keep off the fire

Of heaven from blasting thy mirthful hall,
Open to friends and to strangers and all—
Conductor so old, so mystic and sure,
Consisting in lodging the homeless poor.

The beggar with thee has room at command,
Cherish'd and fed by thy fair daughter's hand.
Compare this with "Unions" cruel and stern;
Henceforth the centre for poor men discern,

And bow to the faith which such thoughts sustains,
While elsewhere the poor man so scorn'd complains.
Now on trees at your side you see hung chains,
Though the murmuring wind alone complains.

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A road through them here can hardly be traced,
Time has its vestiges nearly effaced;
Still, though untrodden, a vista appears,
Once form'd by cruelty, wreck'd hopes, tears.

For once o'er this moss-grown way pass'd along
Some who should live now in bard's highest song;
For captives and slaves were once here in sight,
Directing to faith and its old bless'd light,

Founding the orders with which hist'ry rings,
The glory of saints, of cities, of kings,
When to emancipate, ransom, and save,
Tortures and death all the holy would brave.

Forgotten all now, but faith stands supreme,
To realize what has long pass'd a dream,
And serve for old signals still to proclaim
That slav'ry had for its centre the same,

Like statues antique, once serving for guide,
Whose fingers immoveable, as you ride,
After thousands of years direct your face
To roads that no longer have left a trace.

But lo! what straight avenues, spacious, grand,
Will lead from this crossway where now we stand!
What echoes through darkness on every side,
Beneath the tall trunks with top branches wide!

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Magistrates, warriors, kings here in view,
As on their three roads our steps we pursue,
Direct as before to the one great spring
Of justice and chivalry, still to bring

To truest perfection the social state
On which there is now such fruitless debate.
For kingly rule by our faith guided right,
Was not the vile sway of brute force and might.

But freedom, Parliament, popular voice,
We owe to the Catholic ancient choice;
Outraged, ensnared, and kept sometimes from view,
Still somehow breaking forth ever anew.

I know there are thickets, vision to hide,
Grown here of old time and still at your side;
But cruel, intolerant, tyrant things
You never can trace up to central springs.

Of fountains of freedom, love is source,
But elsewhere old time had often recourse.
A progress, true progress towards Christian light,
Would keep things hideous for ever from sight.

And think you that faith would retain their sway,
Casting obstructions to bar still the way?
Faith knows of progress; 'tis them to restrain;
Banish them truly; she'll never complain.

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What are your laws, left without that sure light?
Things that are looming in old Pagan night.
War, left without the true knightly sweet grace,
Can only disgust, and goodness efface,

Wanting the gleams which might still best atone
For horrors that cause the desolate moan
Of realms discouraged, reduced to a man,
For cure of the woes that nothing else can

Remove from nations, desperate driven,
All from rejecting counsels of Heaven.
Let them have faith, to its fountains repair;
Chivalry, justice, and freedom are there.

But who now approaches, intent on book,
Placid, and happy, and holy his look?
Now peaceful charms descend on the wood,
The road of the Priests being understood.

O'er lawns of Asphodel realized here,
Bright things transform'd seem now to be near;
For fable itself always glows with more light,
When heralds of truth hold a glass to sight.

Let those who revile them come forth and rise;
Their hatred each sound mind fills with surprise.
What would they substitute? these strange men vain.
Is it by laws or by force they'd sustain

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The fabric so vast of the human state,
Leaving all truth subject still to debate?
To be decided by states or by each,
Who of his own some crude fancy would teach?

Thoughtless, ungrateful, or insensate man,
It is not for thee to reverse the plan
Of Him whose envoys, commission'd so high,
About our stray steps should ever be nigh;

Teaching, sustaining, and catching their tone
From Him above all, with nought of their own.
You say, "This mission they never fulfill'd."
Hist'ry denies this, howe'er you've will'd.

No; that great office has never yet fail'd;
Man has corrupted, but truth has prevail'd.
The Church, with its organized system vast,
Through the long ages that since Christ have pass'd,

Directs true sages to that Credo old,
Half of whose benefits never were told,
Even when man, ever thoughtful, surveys
Its contest protracted, yielding his praise.

Abruptly we merge on a dark old road
Where still heathen learning has its abode.
Here we find men to pagans returning,
Thinking to find there some light yet burning,

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To satisfy thirst for true wisdom high,
As if in the writings so long gone by
Could be found a different centre for those
Who faith obsolete now madly suppose.

Vain all such fancies, nowhere can be found
Vistas to truth over more spacious ground.
For first, an agreement most strange appears
In them with what gives us both hopes and fears.

Traditions primeval come back to view,
Proving all in our faith ancient, though new;
The gleams thus concentrated now give light,
Dispersed, they show'd only how dark was night

In ages long prior to the great rise
Of truth now reveal'd clear to mortal eyes.
But then disaccordance is no less shown,
The greatness of which human pride must own.

What things! scarce credible when they are read!
What foul and dark spots through beauty there
spread!
Christian, one moment—a page ere we turn,
With shame, horror-struck, for mankind we burn.

And if from the books we look to the men,
What words for our sad disappointment then!
Their wants and their merits alike are guide
To shores where the flow of the Christian tide

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Will waft to the port that for all men's best,
Where Pagans themselves from the first found rest.
Historians recall'd by the name found next
Have the same counsel for some who're perplex'd.

How many through ages now long since past
Will look for some light that can guide and last!
History yields it both steady and sure,
Disclosing the Church and its long course pure.

Yes, pure, supernatural, sun-like light,
Bursting through clouds, while itself is so bright,
Surrounded with vapours—night if you will,
But glorious, unearthly, clear ever still.

Religion depends on facts to be known
By gath'ring what is in past story shown.
Hist'ry, in consequence, drawn from pure wells,
Main facts of old Catholicity tells.

Unbroken the chain—Protesting all new,
Such are the views on the path you pursue.
Then, too, what surely oft kindles the spirit,
How glorious a past does the old faith inherit!

The names alone sound with a tone so grand,
You might think all minds they had at command.
Direction is even supplied by men
Who these great facts will recount to you then.

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Rash and fanciful inexact pages,
Show coruscations as each whim rages;
But the attentive and cautious fair pen
Points to the centre still guiding wise men,

Feeling, like Fleury, in action repose—
Great proof that calmly and surely he knows;
All that is grand, by his moderate hand
Showing how passions he had at command.

We said from the first, dear comrade, the wood
Is dark, by which word I then understood
Shades of that tree which all evil involves;
This to consider on us now devolves.

O Albert, we pass like thy knight of old,
'Midst goblins and monsters, though not so bold.
There are ill forms which can terrify most,
However at times men loudly may boast.

So vice has its vistas still open vast,
Through which many frighten'd ones ere now pass'd;
I would not at this turn lead you to think,
That at each instant your spirit should sink.

Grasshoppers light that will sing on the way,
Are not fell dragons, whatever some say;
But though we would soothe all absurd alarm,
We cannot but see what is sure to harm.

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The conscience of man is not always dead,
However sophistic may be the head:
Remorse and the aspect of crimes that fright
Have guided some oft to the distant light

Whence demons and bad men will fly away,
Fearing to catch of that brightness a ray.
The devil's denied on roads from him call'd,
While others will believe in his might, appall'd,

Without seeing cloven feet piercing shoes,
Or aught that old Fancy to paint would choose;
For teeth still are visible far from false,
Though looks are not true as he leads the waltz.

In fact, when they see him in bad men vile,
From the centre no one can then beguile
Those who adhere to the knowledge of man,
Still ever the same since this state began.

Besides, past all doubt, in the darkest breast,
Innocence often will seem what is best:
Nostalgies sublime, an instinct of home,
Revisit at times those who farthest roam.

'Midst ominous clouds will pierce a bright ray,
That will gleam on the sure and central way;
Perhaps not even through Virtue's own bower
Shines it a moment with equal power.

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Now to those thus ensnared the wild road turns—
Victims of folly, for whom pity burns.
Alas! for the tender one, lonely, cold!
Alas! for the prodigal, seeming bold!

In the one, what depths since the fatal day,
When, a child, from her home constrain'd to stray!
For constraint of some kind, and believe it well,
Was the cause of her flight, when truth she'll tell.

Oh, ponder it, ponder it, harshness stern,
That you from her fall may a lesson learn!
In the other, what pains of heart and soul
Since he follow'd passions without control!

No rhetoric this—I sing what I know;
In nearly all cases 'tis even so.
Oh whither, through wastes that are lone and drear,
Can they wander now without grief and fear?

To the Church which opens its peaceful fold
For those with more faults than ever were told.
There now is their centre; and so proceed
Those who some lasting return need.

Such is the guidance to fountains in view,
Furnish'd by those who their lives thus renew.
But deeper, yes, deeper the dark spreads round,
For here is the road of the proud one found.

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He passes like sound of the winter's breath,
Himself an image of dulness and death—
The forest before though solemn yet fair,
Shows nothing but monsters around him there.

Yet his state, his ways, his thoughts, and his face,
Direct to a lovely and happy place—
Where humbleness ever so sweet, profound,
Can cast its bright spell on all that lies round.

Pride has three tracks that are strictly its own,
Seen in itself, in divisions wide sown;
At last in the sand where nought is believed,
And men will think all but themselves deceived.

Methinks of the first we need say no more,
Stretching on, lonesome and sad as of yore.
But force uprooting, dispersing like storms,
On its next blown path destroys and deforms

What the old faith once bestow'd on our race,
Leaving alone with it misconstrued trace.
Yet contradictions, perversions most plain,
Can ways force for some their faith to sustain.

For truth is so simple, so grand, and fair,
That many the centre know can't be there:
Besides, when truths are not wholly denied,
A break or a vista can be descried

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By some who will try to make well agree
Parts which disjointed and wrested they see.
All choosing of dogmas, call'd what you will,
Is but relapse to antiquity still.

'Twas a poet who left this sentence just,
And that here is a vista, grant you must.
The third of pride's tracks crosses sand uneven,
Leads through dry wilds, and refresh'd not from Heaven.

Fix'd to deny, and believe nothing at all,
Lo the last depths where Pride's legions will fall—
I would not be rude, still less harsh, unkind,
Not to pity the wand'rings of each mind.

I would not be passionate, uncivil,
No, though again we should meet the devil:
But still, it is hard to be calm and cool,
Meeting a sophist like Solomon's fool,

Who, forsooth, thinketh in his little brain
That he can all laws of the world explain—
That seeing his fancies in vellum bound,
All mysteries now pure nonsense are found.

Speculate, wonder, and doubt as you will,
Sense that is common should ever guide still;
And he who rejects this natural light
Is—let us stop when we've said, an odd wight.

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What strange inconceivable startling tones
Issue from some of these dry musty bones!
Sidonius of old said plain of such men—
"Impudence only remains with them then."

These critics, misnamed by the French, have nests
Of sophists like adders, of Nature pests.
Why use expressions to insult so nigh?
Because, stung by sophists, souls wither, die.

Age grows insensate, youth ceases to feel,
We need not proceed much more to reveal.
Rest assured, youngling, there's no one I cheat,
When calling the gloom on this track complete—

The ground buried deep under fallen leaves,
Strewn by the force that the whirlwind weaves,
The depths with dry branches all mouldering fill'd,
The trunks without sap by the virus kill'd.

And why should we fawn on the things that strive
Of all future hopes ourselves to deprive?
That bid us no longer look to the sky,
To see beyond clouds, to God's glory nigh,

Those dear ones on earth whom we loved so well,
That only by tears our love we can tell?
Avaunt then weak, maudlin, and sham appeal,
When thieves from widows and orphans they steal.

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For widow'd and orphans we are below,
When you leave us deprived of all but woe.
Minds quite devoted to doubt and deny
To fountains of truth find it hard to fly.

And yet, I repeat it, to point out the way,
Common sense has placed signals still as we stray;
For theories spun out to bridge o'er chasms,
Still threatening those whose own thought fills with spasms,

To reason alone are wild and absurd—
Nothing more silly can ever be heard;
Scoffing at mysteries, and yet the first
To conjure up wonders for which they thirst;

Religion effacing, in all true sense,
And then insisting on one of pretence;
Aping of Christians the customs and rites
Adapted to truths their principle blights.

They say we should something adore and can;
And since God exists not, let's worship man—
Man not existing except in the type—
And now for this wisdom the world is ripe!

Rejecting what reason cannot disprove,
Fixing on nonsense their thought and their love,
Each taking such pains to be but a sot,
Pretending to think the things that are not;

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Proclaiming their thoughts to be deep and good,
In a jargon by no one understood;
Still crowning with thorns things beauteous and true,
To mangle, disfigure, hide them from view;

Casting their science like nets upon youth,
With barbarous phrases concealing truth;
Though straining so recklessly, all their wit
But ends in resources like "Devil's Bit."

For what mankind adores, and ever will,
They seek, as through spite, to snap off and kill:
This is what yields to minds somewhat more sound
Direction to roads o'er rational ground.

For who can like to feel himself sinking?
Though Hegel and Comte say it's his thinking—
'Tis darkness they give us, 'tis nought, 'tis death,
Reason can henceforth dispense with their breath.

And turn to the centre, showing true light,
Guiding from these men's tempestuous night;
For tempests attend this darkness ere long,
That ought to dictate a palinode song.

What are the fruits of the Infidel's tree?
Peace, union, love, and pure humanity?
Nay, you but jest, my fine confident guide;
See what's behind you, or close at your side.

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Wars and dissension, hate and confusion,
These are fruits of your sceptic's delusion;
Not always quite ripe or seen from the first,
But sooner or later likely to burst

From sprigs that seem'd promising beauties new,
Such as the world was destined to view;
Developing things that were long conceal'd
By leaves most specious till fuller reveal'd.

Nothing more easy than promises fair;
And here all we see is how much some dare.
But are we to turn from Faith, Hope, and Love,
From life illumined from Heaven above,

To rest in shades of what looks like the tree
That brought first to Eden man's misery?
Religious fanatics in every age
Would neutralize what we find at this stage;
I know it. With war in heart or on tongue,
They seem to disprove what here has been sung.

But who will confound this pestilent fire
With the light central that love will inspire?
Apes, foxes, clothed wolves, all others may be,
But the old white-robed are the guides for me.

Glades that now open are call'd from the sad,
The track we last follow'd leads to what's bad;
And what can be worse than sadness of man,
Left only to Nature? Say if you can.

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The life of the vulgar is one long wail—
A vague and deaf murmur, the same old tale;
Life in the sensitive is but a cry;
And life in the poet, a tuneful sigh[2].

The nut has its worm within the fair shell,
So sadness within wild man's heart will dwell.
Whence does the vale that's call'd from such sorrow,
Direction for men when wand'ring borrow?

From the plain fact, that the remedy lies
In the old faith from which each lost one flies.
He talks of its gloom; he may talk ever,
But gladness from faith no man can sever.

There's something besides in Catholic rite,
Quite wondrous for cheering the downcast sprite;
It sheds a new light upon every thing,
And of soft broken hearts repairs the wing.

Distinctions each week, the Mass of each day,
Variety causes whate'er some say;
While life, stript of this, monotonous grown,
Hears amidst pleasures an undefined moan.

Compare the persons and follow them home,
You will see your centre, and no more roam.
Now from misfortunes the path owes its rise,
That this too leads there, need cause no surprise.

[2] Lamartine.

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Calamity softens a stony proud heart,
Therefore the unction of faith can impart.
He who is down-struck with nature alone,
To no useful end seems to turn his groan.

Besides, he seeks those who give what he wants,
Comfort as yielded in Catholic haunts.
The common of martyrs—you see them pass,
Their only resource is to cry, alas!

For what can they know of suffering here
Being provided to modify fear
Of all that futurity, dark and stern,
Waiting those who from grief could nothing learn?

While those at the centre feel that mere woe
Can a bright prospect here ever bestow.
So that there can be no road much more sure,
If but by stooping these clues you procure.

In forests themselves you must have perceived
How often the wildness can be relieved
By change in the form, the colour, and ground;
And so too in life as we pass 'tis found,

Coming to highways where wisdom presides,
On which still guidance more formal abides;
For wisdom that's false directs to the true,
Placing a contrast most striking in view.

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But pray how distinguish and make a choice?
Simply from judging by Nature's own voice;
For what responds to the words from the Mount,
It now feels must flow from the central fount.

In vain you limit the object of man,
Placing chief good in his brief mortal span;
In vain from the sophists you catch your tone,
Nature will you and your notions disown.

For Nature will seek still the spaces vast
Through which Joubert sported, and flew, and pass'd,
Open, and flooded with oceans of light,
Where joy will compensate for dazzled sight,

An atom in radiance that cheers his soul,
Though nothing distinct is seen or in whole.
Man with true joy will expand those bright wings
Of which that philosopher sweetly sings,

From brightness to brightness wheeling to soar,
Till in death is light that lasts evermore.
If here all true wisdom be rest in light,
That of the Catholic must be in sight.

There is effulgence in which souls can fly,
Never to doubt, or to falter, or sigh,
Space, true, which no mortal eyes can e'er scan,
But the joy, and life, and last end of man.

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Thus floating through life-feeding, lustrous air,
He sees but that which is wondrous and fair,
While instinct proclaims he has found the way
To wing his flight later to endless day.

Yet ready at call, like falcon on high,
At the first signal that he can descry,
He follows the beck of his master's will,
And lights meek on the hand, a servant still.

There it is seen how faith honours the wise,
Insulters of reason how loud defies;
How boundless the scope of its mental range,
How deep, how pacific, to nothing strange;

Apt to assimilate and make its own
Whate'er of useful around it has grown,
Not as an afterthought, sly and constrain'd,
But true to principle always maintain'd;

How it can take up and perfect the things
Which science as tributes unwilling brings;
In brief, how, embracing all truth and good,
Its future is not e'en yet understood.

The Bible itself has a track to name,
Where the direction is always the same.
Abuse of the text, when the centre's hid,
Shows those who best use it and ever did.

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To whom does it point for comments the best?
To Catholic writers from whom the rest
Do nought but borrow, concealing their theft
From those who are of its sense bereft.

Besides, than its spirit, and letter, and text,
No better signal for those who're perplex'd.
Let them mark what a contrast shows the book,
According to which of these ways they look.

Speeding to faith, which first gave it to man,
How truly divine its limitless span!
Recede from that light, and a text remains
Which every folly that's human sustains.

Wild rovers see in the Bible but things
Which arm their minds with sharp cruel stings,
Wars and revolt, men predestined to fall,
Calvin foreshadow'd, and inhuman all;

While those who pursue it with central light,
Show a great contrast most glorious and bright—
Sweet words of "good news" upon every page,
Still suited to minds at every stage;

Ways patriarchal, most simple and mild,
To edify age, enrapture the child;
Ways that the faith too can ever inspire,
All that the wisest will love and admire.

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The key to the Bible only is found
At yonder bright fountain in central ground.
Contemplatives then give name to a way
Which leads to true faith in the darkest day;

For some from life's troubles always seek rest
In thinking of matters gravest and best,
And the deeper men think, wishing for peace,
The surer from error they find release.

Gravity, rising from source that is pure,
Will make each path not merely bright, but sure;
For brightness conducts to the source of light,
And central truth then must be within sight.

Avenues named here from virtues divine
Lead to where faith will most gloriously shine.
What means distinction in virtue, which all
Must be divine as its phase here you call?

True, God gives Nature, but faith can bestow
Grace supernatural with it to grow.
When this with its beauty and force is seen,
The root must be view'd and cherish'd, I ween.

And ancient story, with what's seen each day,
Leaves nought for sceptics with reason to say;
For though our judgments are subject to change,
Their sphere being letters—the moral range;

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Though, not as in regions of science, here
Cause for revision may often appear;
Though starting afresh sometimes may be well,
In order with time the strict truth to tell,

There still are, I believe, says a cautious man[3],
Who seeks with exactness all things to scan,
Conclusions acquired and fix'd to find,
Even where questions are all of this kind,

Yes, demonstrations which no time can spoil,
And from which no mind can justly recoil,
To no change subject, like sciences pure,
But such as must still for ever endure.

The science of morals, understood well,
And justly applied, has facts then to tell,
Definitive judgments that nought can change,
As in mathematics and their strict range.

And such irreversible things are when
Some virtues divine are ascribed to men.
Sanctity Catholic, seen in the saints,
Age after age free from all worldly taints—

Moral result, and confined to that pale
Where passions in masks will never prevail—
'Tis clear as the sunlight in summer sky,
That this exceeds Nature, can never die.

[3] Ste. Beuve.

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Then follow its fibres beneath the ground,
And the central tree is sure to be found;
While all that creeps near it ends but in dust,
Like fruit of the Dead Sea no one can trust.

Yet mark how this road now sharply will turn,
To shut out the true and with false light burn;
For gloomy ascetics murmur all day,
Pretending to falsehood you homage pay,

When what is human you cherish in heart,
And would, where it's due, affection impart.
They teach you to feel a deep love for none,
And say that in this way Heaven is won.

You never could think how great is their zeal,
They tell you, least trifles can sin reveal;
That he who despises cant and grimace
Has marks of the demon stamp'd on his face.

Thus spoiling of all things the highest, best,
By leaving due limits never at rest;
Enticing the rich to them to resort,
And preaching retreat while living at Court,

Sharp and vindictive, and full ot intrigues,
While bound to each other with secret leagues;
Closing all apertures that you can't see
Where shines the old faith with blest charity.

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But smiles of true saints, with free easy air,
Can soon make amends, and damage repair;
Whate'er fanatics and stoics may say,
Letting light stream on you wholesome and gay;

Still thinking the best of all whom they see,
No matter what all their failings may be,
And Heaven's own cause not aping to serve
By teaching from honour and right to swerve;

Content with the fervour that faith inspires,
Not daring to offer up other fires.
O Priests of sweet France, your portraits are here,
Thou dear Curate of Molphe, I see thee near—

The gayest, freest, the wisest of men—
The world adores thy holiness then.
These are the safe guides who point out the road,
Still riding in light as they ever rode.

With Mariane's eyes and those of Dorine,
To laugh at th' others we hold it no sin;
Though when we but hear their words counted sage,
We own that we inwardly burn with rage.

Natural, humanized virtue once more
On its own road will faith central restore;
Showing that all things to true hearts most dear
From Catholic faith have nothing to fear.

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For this prescribes and will ever pronounce,
Whate'er some ignorant zealots announce,
That of natural right no force on earth,
Human or sacred, can lessen the worth.

So honour and kindness, and all such grace,
With what is holy will ever keep pace.
Savages coming from civilized state,
With brute force and manners worthy of hate,

Have next their own bush-way on which are led
To the centre by shame some fill'd with dread.
A road is found, further, call'd from the spring
Yielding the recompense virtue will bring.

Still the same centre then ever in view,
Those wells I name not, but 'tis they renew
The life that is true, of goodness the goal,
Best gift of Heaven—the life of the soul.

So if of virtue's reward we would speak,
It is from the old faith you all must seek:
Hope constant, steady, true gladness of heart,
Sure of the rest when from life you depart.

Read books of sages from first to the last,
You find thus by faith that all are surpass'd,
Rather that nothing deserves in our scroll
Mention, but what thus keeps life in the soul.

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At this point we come to shades of retreat,
Where is found always the shy cloister'd seat;
For old and new Pagans have been inclined
Under some name to seek rest for their mind,

Avoiding all observation of men,
Hoping perfection to realize then.
Solitude too, without superstition,
Seems a great object some hearts are set on.

Pythagoras, shall I cite him who knew
Where the deepest perceptions often grew?
Who his gravest disciples always told
To seek the wild desert where echoes roll'd.

Tusculum, Tibur, Salone, can say
How worshippers solitude can repay;
'Tis nature that sends men upon this road,
Where genius so thoughtful has often strode.

What are the vistas for all thus disposed
To see the great centre which is proposed?
These vistas are wide, romantic, and old,
In numbers exceeding what can be told.

First, central truth provides what is best
For all who are seeking religious rest.
Of hermits and monks, and their hoary piles,
We might sing and beguile our weary miles.

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But thus much should always rest in your mind,
For these in the old faith best rules men find.
Again, through the darkness of trees so tall,
An echo is call'd up that might appal.

Hark to the solemn and not distant bell,
Tolling at times with a deep fitful swell!
Shortly before us will rise the grey spires,
With cloisters that every artist admires,

While the old legend or story, though new,
Enhancing the interest of all you view,
Will prove what beneficent things and great
Attend the long course of this mystic state.

For wisdom and prudence of rule most old,
Above all results which no one, though bold,
Can question or rob of well-earn'd glory,
Attach'd to true deeds as found in story,

Must form an avenue, noble, wide,
With scenery solemn on every side,
Which leads to the centre in Christian Rome,
Of all smit by the counsels only home.

For what do rovings monastic proclaim?
That elsewhere these virtues end but in shame;
While stedfast and clinging to Peter's chair,
What all men should honour will be found there.

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Diffusing more peace through the world around,
With learning such as in each age is found;
Tilling the earth too and making it yield
What grew not before in garden or field,

Furnishing great men, sagacious and strong,
To shelter the weak from harshness and wrong,
Freeing the serfs and employing the youth,
Keeping society docile to truth,

Raising the poor and redeeming the slaves,
Teaching the truth which enlightens and saves—
Results such as these can still show us plain
That here was no sloth to make men complain,

No state Asiatic, dreamy and fond,
Such as with others creates the sole bond—
Can aid us to guess or find out the way
Where what is perfect of this kind will stay.

Their enemies too, their true type once known,
Easily guide by a way of their own;
For what yields hatred in minds temper'd so,
Must be what's right. Let them ever shout, No.

But now through the wood we nearly have pass'd
Evening sheds gleams, and the end comes at last;
Streaks of bright glory illumine the sky,
As if to denote the centre is nigh.

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The trees have now rest; the winds die away,
It is that we have not farther to stray:
Advancing through life, the road of old age
Yields for all passing a sure-guided stage.

For now there are shades which specially wait
To mar and to cloud all this wearied state—
And when it is found the old faith can chase
Vices and phantoms that age will deface,

Light will not fail to stream on the centre,
As when in childhood the wood we enter;
For all the weakness of life thus grown old
Touch'd by faith becomes strength and gladness bold.

Old thoughts combine then with sentiments young,
As if from the heart they had freshly sprung;
And this, for one who belated must tramp,
Proves not in fiction a wonderful lamp.

There is a power in Catholic truth
To keep unimpair'd the graces of youth,
So that the aged can inspire a sigh,
As if they were young men when they must die,

Like the old Roman[4] of whom it was said,
Men wept for him as for a young man dead.
If tears, then, like beads on our grave they tell,
Sure somewhat, at least, in our life was well.

[4] Antoninus Pius.

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Where, then, is the spring that can make the old
Resemble the child or the youngling bold?
Philosophy scorns, and yields to no joy,
If age should retain the trace of a boy.

Oh, speed to the faith which revives the heart,
And which of young life can the sweets impart!
Pedants like Petrarch may still cry out shame,
But their senile good is an empty name.

Age is respected and sweeten'd, restored,
Freed from the griefs that are elsewhere deplored;
While then, too, affinity grows and reigns
Between such old age and what faith sustains,

Age sees no wisdom when fervour declaims,
Saying, like Alceste, while some he defames,
"Pray now distinguish, and this clearly see,
The friend of mankind is no friend for me."

The moderate, tolerant, wise, true bond—
Of all this age grows enamour'd and fond;
Its last mental pleasure, found to be then,
To show itself just, impartial to men—

To say of opponents only what friends
Must own of them, heedless of his own ends,
Proves to be now Catholicity pure;
Let others object; of that it is sure.

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For charity teaches what sophists call
Philosophy, progress, neutral and all.
Age finds the faith which is old is still new,
Adapting wisdom to each change of view

That years and experience will still induce
Where reigns the faith which can all good produce.
With God for its last friend, life becomes then
A hymn of affection overflowing for men;

With love and tenderness it can't explain,
It joys for their gladness, grieves for their pain;
In love with their comeliness, age can't tire,
While watching their manners, all to admire.

No disenchantment spreads now over all,
Such as years left to Nature will befall,
While clinging to life with strange insane fears,
The closer as each fond tie disappears.

Faith on our life here below sheds a charm,
And yet it can ward off from age this harm,
By keeping joys of the future in sight,
And even on earth diffusing their light.

From this final hope aye still in reserve,
Love of the present can't cause it to swerve.
Of a long course, too, it needs must be tired;
And then, with sole wish for heaven inspired,

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It speeds to the centre, if not before,
And so wanders, errs, and mistakes no more.
The last road offers a guidance as well,
When of death and of tombs it seems to tell.

Now the funeral chant is heard to sound
Through the shrubs and flowers that deck the ground.
On one side alone the forest seems dark,
Where fungi, mildew, and dark weeds you mark;

But yonder, where crosses rising are seen,
The way is still hopeful with outward sheen;
For a broad vista, and gloriously bright,
Here opens inviting to central light.

So, my sensitive youth, at last you're led
To hillocks where mortals must rest their head;
The plants of rich hues, and tall cypress spires,
Bend to the zephyr which love then inspires.

As if even graves can somehow reveal
The hope which will o'er the softest heart steal;
Man is by nature so kneaded of earth,
Whence in fair Eden his race had its birth,

That do what he will to soar o'er that mould,
It still yields him joys for which he's not cold:
He loves its perfume when he tills the ground.
What is a palace to the things there found?

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Its plants, its fruits, its sweet flowers or grass,
All dark interiors will ever surpass;
For poor wearied limbs to lie in that breast,
Though immortal, the thought can yield him rest.

So far we own that our instinct can guide,
Though no direct signals stand by our side;
But where are vistas that lead thee from here
To the truth central? They open at fear

Which nature alone has ever of death,
Thinking of sighs and of short thick-drawn breath:
And then sees how faith can work a great change,
And even in death through heaven's light range.

For the central fountain of life stands high,
And no great mortal fears to that come nigh.
Are there earthquakes in Alps? Virgil says, No;
Such trembling belongs to the mind that's low.

Friend, have you seen a dear loved maiden part,
Jesus and Mary inscribed in her heart?
I saw it, I saw a daughter thus leave:
Henceforth no changes on earth can deceive,

Or blind my eyes to the mystical chain
Which raises such souls to a life again.
Such death is no winter that comes to tread
And to strew the wan leaves cold on thy head.

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'Tis spring that arrives with softness of love,
To waft thee to bloom for ever above.
But looking near us, to what lies below,
Anxious to reach the same centre you grow.

For somehow, its beams can blend into one
Death and the light by which heaven is won.
Life and its change are mix'd in one glory,
Both form one Drama—one sweet story.

Then, too, death's adjuncts may even be view'd
As cheerful, with all needless gloom eschew'd:
For thus while gently and upwards you rise,
To the last Humanity soothes your eyes.

No stern flashes from fanatic's will,
But love's softest beams will shine on you still;
With faith, you have guardians human and kind,
Indulgent to weakness creeping on mind,

Ready to hold up the cross to the eye,
But tender to catch and pity the sigh,
For heaven's bright glory angels to guide,
For Nature that weeps but friends at your side.

But still, once for all, whatever I sing
Is a plain, ancient, well-understood thing,
Never implying delusive fierce fire,
Blazing to sublimate what we admire;

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Changing its form, and its spirit, and sound,
Raging to poison the wholesomest ground.
The centre is Faith, the pure and the old,
And its streams not such as sciolists bold

Will pretend to draw from its holy spring,
When still it is only themselves they bring.
But nothing of this, in its new false course,
Can be traced to flow from the central source.

The last act finish'd, the spirit has fled;
Faith remains active to bury the dead,
With rite that chases remaining last fears,
While leaving to flow the fountain of tears.

Then tombs and epitaphs need not deplore,
When form'd by faith as in ages of yore;
For see how it shines through the vault or sod,
To raise all hearts to the centre in God.

O Christ! what impressions rise on the mind,
When Catholic symbols on graves you find!
For the garden before that bloom'd so fair,
Now reaches to Heaven, whose own lie there.

And still now roll on days, and months, and years,
And faith in cherish'd remembrance appears;
Having the secret to cause things to last,
Which without it, like dreams, would soon be past.

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Whatever is tender, constant, and true,
Will always seem fresh, reviving anew,
When faith at roots of each delicate thing
Will soften the soil to let flowers spring.

Not lonesome, forgotten, to strangers left,
Are graves of loved ones of whom you're bereft;
Faith leads you to visit, kneel o'er the spot,
Which thenceforth from mem'ry nothing can blot.

Thus roads of tombs can direction impart
To those who remain and those who depart;
So that on all lines through life's dark wild wood,
Clear signals had pointing ever stood

To the spot central, mysterious and fair,
With Love at our side, and Hope in the air,
The softest companions for man's poor breast,
Yet warding off all that can break his rest,

Still winning his thoughts to soar on for ever,
Aloft above all that from Heaven would sever;
Leaving him only with pity for those
Who wander from bliss that it aye bestows

On all who pass from the Labyrinth wild,
Where those who want love are ever beguiled.
For love confers truth that will be denied
To science without it searching with pride;

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Exploring, ravish'd with dubious delight,
When natural gleams of it come to sight;
Preferring some discomposed ray and small
To a dim comprehensive view of all—

A mote, a mere particle in their hand,
To an horizon past all our thoughts grand;
Boundless, though faint, yet with mountains that rise,
Lost in bright clouds, the last gates of the skies.

O fountain of truth for the human mind,
At thy gracious brink what flowers we find!
Heart's-ease, forget-me-not, lilies so white,
Roses, immortals, with starry things bright.

While playing together joyfully round,
Forms more truthful than Naiads are found,
Maidens and youths with the partners of man,
Angels already in life's chequer'd span,

Artless and mirthful, yet ever holy,
Sages with thoughts that are like theirs wholly,
Enraptured to view already with eyes
What seraphs themselves might fill with surprise,

How truth will thus endlessly rise and flow,
The waters of life on man to bestow;
Composed not alone of light for the mind,
But of love that renders it just and kind;

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While Hope, ever bursting forth, fills the stream,
To make things round you more than a dream,
More than a vision, with balmy rich store,
Now winging our hearts over earth to soar;

To reach the Unseen whence all pure springs rise—
God peerless, and beauty that never dies.
The friends now rose, there was nothing more said,
Homewards, in silence, the wanderer sped.

Whether he thought that a clue had been found,
That thenceforth his way o'er every ground
Could safely be made out, I cannot say,
Experience can prove that many will stray,

Strangely preferring bewilderment sheer
To reaching or viewing the centre near—
That Ithaca real, sweetest of homes,
While each, like Ulysses, constantly roams,

Not like the hero of Homer, inclined,
In order to reach it, to fix their mind.
But still, in conclusion, this may be thought,
He might by such means have found what he sought,

Discover'd the focus of life's vast scheme,
Where all things are real, no more a dream,
Where beauty, and goodness, and truthful things,
Would hover around him with azure wings

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In a sublunar bliss, unfolding hues
Which at sparkling springs still each year renews,
While he, to their Fountain exhaustless nigh,
Would never grow weary and never die.

THE PLEASURES OF AUTHORSHIP.

PENS and the man I sing, who fathom'd all
The depths which swallow authors when they sink,
Scribbling and printing ever as they fall,
Still doing great things as they vainly think.
O muse! Apollo! whom shall I invoke,
When singing what befalls the hero scribe?
I fear not any brother to provoke,
I'll paint but one alone of all the tribe;

Who much did suffer in the strife of quills,
Defending thoughts that he did aye adore,
In all fields finding true Castalian rills,
Inflamed himself by beauty each day more;
Tomes after tomes achieving, without care
For what might happen from unnumber'd foes,
Showing at least how greatly he could dare
In wielding fragments to make patchwork prose.

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That he should wield a pen had been his fate.
Paper is patient more than human bent,
He at least proved it early up and late,
For still in this way all his wits he spent.
It must have been a mania, a disease,
To keep on penning ceaseless every day;
No hope of fame; himself he sought to please
By showing what he loved and wish'd to say.

But though at first it is devotion pure
To letters and poetic passions deep;
Yet still one cannot always be quite sure
That o'er the mind no other wishes sweep.
What skills such prowess on the fields of ink
If champions have no name or favour still
Later, perhaps, you'll find such words did sink
Into our hero's thoughts to spoil his will.

Thin he was grown by nourishing his mind,
And Hugo says there's nothing like that fast;
The yellow parchment seem'd but of his kind,
He lived, a kind of spectre, on the past.
Knighthood and falconry, romances old,
Scotus, dark Michael, Erigin, and Dunn,
To pierce those forests he was still so bold,
Though nothing after all as yet he won.

These Furies seized him when but quite a boy;
His money all in buying books was spent;
To read and mark them was his private joy,
Whene'er to Paris with gay friends he went.

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Yet this did not suffice to quench his thirst;
In summer heat and in the winter cold,
At doors of libraries he was the first
To enter and distract the guardians old,

Demanding folios then but little read,
Or quaint rare volumes buried far on high;
O'er which, with hand for cushion to his head,
He felt a rapture or he heaved a sigh.
Then to transcribe the gay or solemn page,
He had his foolscap to his elbow near,
On which he copied with a perfect rage,
Of cold intense without a moment's fear.

A foray vow'd, ('twas on the Pont Royal,
Suggested suddenly, he knew not how,)
At once resolving soon to make a trial,
To join his fragments was his business now.
Just twice before he sallied forth in print,
But it would weary did I mention all;
Of quests like this I really now must stint,
And only tell what later did befall.

So then again, in sevenfold array
His tissue wrought, he courts the public view;
The greater fool, but, as I said, his way
Was ever to unfold and print anew.
The years roll'd on, his raids forgotten quite;
No one, 'twas said, alive of mortal men
Could think to follow such a dauntless wight,
Who wastes his substance through a ceaseless pen,

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Producing trophies that were not his own,
Mosaics merely snatch'd from others' store,
Still quoting authors all but little known,—
Their thoughts, their jewels bright, and nothing more:
The old Faith too!—then what could he expect?
'Twas ask'd by many whom he wish'd to serve,
He might be view'd by some few of his "*sect*,"
But as for others, Heaven them preserve

From losing time o'er things so dull and strange,
Mere fragments, thefts by scissors more than pen,
When of new thinkers they enjoy'd the range,
Fitted to interest well-informèd men.
So then his eyes now being over-strain'd,
No longer antique armour he would don,
He felt his vanity for once too pain'd;
In other fashion beauty might be won.

He mounts again; he tries to make his style
More lively, or more suited to the age;
But all he gains is a malicious smile,
With words well framed to brand his new-clad rage.
Still undismay'd, his pen has no more rest;
His themes are pitiful or else serene,
To praise the holy, beautiful, and best,
Or the bright landscape where the Thames is seen.

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But all the same, though meant to give to schools,
For one prized trophy "no demand" or sale,
The other, which he thought adhered to rules,
Was met with jests, deem'd laughable, though stale.
Buried in warehouses, unseen, unknown,
No stranger ask'd for them, no friend would pay;
Mere useless rubbish now completely grown,
None to tell even where they mouldering lay.

What skills his leading Janin and the rest
Captives, ne'er clothed in English tongue before?
'Tis call'd pedantic, faulty at the best,
Showing quotation simply, nothing more.
Titles themselves a falsehood and a snare,
Style vile cigars denoting more than sense;
All meaning hid in words to make you stare,
A shame to publish such bald, dull pretence.

So thus sheer lumber all these relics found,
In stores where room was wanting, he was told;
He was entreated to find other ground,
As none of his since long time had been sold.
"Sell! Oh dear no, sir, not the slightest chance;
To say '*but little*' would be to deceive;
Attendance, you know, authors often dance,
But here much longer these you cannot leave."

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Was this enough of bitterness to daunt
Him of the pen, prepared again to try
The chance of authorship? No, still the taunt
Of friends polite, to whose indulgent eye
He would submit some poetry as well,
Awaited him in plenteous varied measure;
And of these now I must proceed to tell;
Droll they are, and can be heard with pleasure.

A blunt friend comes: "Write on, but do not print,"
He says, no praises mingled all the while.
He speaks of blame, he even drops a hint
That time is wanted to correct the style.
Not lowest yet in all the tribe who try,
How painful if still lower you should fall!
"To stop you then, I'll pray, I'll warn, I'll sigh,
And tell you truth which must your mind appal.

"For hitherto, not wholly dupe proclaim'd,
Some few I know have look'd into your books,
Yes, once or twice I've even heard you named,
That you can quote, at least it almost looks.
But even this a moment may reverse;
Let others print; for what have they to lose?
Mere bubbles on the surface is their verse;
To wait then, and to print not you should choose."

Kind, vain attempt to stem the rushing tide;
No answer even given, hastens he
To Clerkenwell, his poems at his side,
Impatient till all printed he can see.

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"Stop yet," another cries, to whom were sent
Some of these beauties whom he would commend,
"Efface this stuff, pray what by that is meant?"
But all in vain, for Folly will not bend.

Authors, unlike Vadius, fine in feeling,
Have still a sly way, if you mark them well,
Into the house of friend ofttimes stealing,
Not to seek praise, but thinking he may tell
Whether their work has pleased him very much;
Waiting a short while first, lest they should be
Too soon to have the information such
As they would then elicit carelessly.

Oh, the rich feast! if all could here be told,
But to this Horace only could invite,
For all these dainties, as his times are old,
And few can equal his artistic might.
Well, hear the answers, now but six or seven:
"Your charming volume came into my hand
Some few days past; I shall be in heaven
When a spare moment I have at command.

"I keep it for the country and the fields;
You know that here I'm always in a hurry;
There I can taste what I am sure it yields,
But here is ever something me to flurry."
What can more flatter? But yet, not at ease,
Thence to another friend he makes his way,
Who tells him how he knows that it *must* please,
Though what is in it yet he cannot say.

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Another has it, thanks quite overflow;
  But people tease him with such fond demands,
Ask'd if he's read it. Needs must he say no.
  So at his side, uncut, the book still stands.
Another would devour it, yes, quite all,
  The moment he received it, when behold!
To Paris on to-morrow there's a call,
  So the new book is read just as the old.

Another, drawing in his breath, much fears,
  The age to Poets little is inclined.
A book like this, he says, when it appears,
  A sale he's sure can hardly ever find.
"I thank you greatly," still another cries,
  "Your lovely book is never left to me,
I still demand it, but each thief denies;"
  While on his shelf at rest you can it see.

"Your book is here," says yet another friend,
  "Hem! I regard it with intensest pleasure;
But a whole month at Hastings I must spend,
  Till my return, hem! I lose your treasure."
So one by one such hopes all fade away,
  The scribbling hero-poet may lament.
What more? 'Tis printed! it remains to pay
  The bill portentous—and now all is spent.

Yet still to a brave oarsman he will speed,
  One mirthful, somewhat slily, all his life;
Silent at first, he gravely fails at need—
  "The book not read, but handed to his wife."

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A pause ensues, of course he means to say,
At least she finds it worth some admiration:
Alas! with such hopes fed, 'tis vain to stay,
The subject dropp'd, he talks about the nation.

In time an old friend comes, a poet born;
At once with smiles sinister he commences—
Smiles that but ill conceal the inward scorn,
Words to commend, but clearly all pretences.
"Allow me to congratulate you, friend,
Becoming thus at last a child of song.
Success of course on you does not depend;
For that, I fear, you'll have to wait too long."

At last he finds some victim who has read it;
"Well, indeed, yes, but then you know that prose
Is what I best like; verses, to my wit,
Ought to be always first-rate, I suppose.
Of course I do not mean yours don't excel;
Pray whom had you in view in such a line?
Ah, I perceive,—you do not mean to tell."
He's answer'd thus, while Folly will divine

It is the cause he serves that makes them frown,
And feel against him such rankling displeasure;
He thinks he merits now a martyr's crown,
When all their fury he will seek to measure.
Oh, Folly's balm for blows implanted well!
To think they prove his merit, not his shame;
When the spectators only truth will tell,
Inflicting on him their satiric blame,

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Ironically crying, "What a store
Of poet's genius in the public now!"
Citing one line detach'd, and then no more,
To prove that each must to their sentence bow.
One says, "Mere echoes of some lyrics known;"
Another, "'Tis not poetry, but prose."
And yet an echo must retain a tone
Of sound to which it an existence owes.

Pray what in music greater pleasure yields,
Than variations of a well-known air?
Then take a flower from an author's fields,
Somehow 'tis new, though its known tints are there.
Still they repeat, "You've not a notion rough
Of verse; it would be idle to prolong
Our mention of such vapid, senseless stuff,
It would be compliment to call it song."

As if for knocks applied with open aim,
One had a right their compliments to hear,
As if one thought that they would confer fame,
For wanting them to look at things too near.
Such is at least our champion's quick reply,
Quixotic-like, insensible to blows,
When all men thought to see him gasp and die,
Such the contentment Folly then bestows.

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" Enchanters mere, he cries without a pause,
What other issue could I e'er expect?
Prostrate I am, but for a noble cause,
I owe my fall to your great potent sect."
Still he would round his hobby ever pry,
To seek some other cause of his defeat,
Just as great Mavers casts a piercing eye
Over some founder'd charger's legs and feet.

So other ground, he thinks, of grave offence,
Lay in his use of plain familiar speech.
This they object to, he says, with pretence,
The secret being he would goodness reach.
They suffer others to tell all so plain,
No phrase too simple if the sense be bad,
Of common words they never then complain,
Hearing of Juan and his wildness mad.

But when the game seems useful for the heart,
Mere doggerel then is found, their gentlest word
For each familiar line at which they start,
Pronouncing all they hear to be absurd.
Now this he calls a wrong, fallacious measure;
Rejecting it, he prays to be excused,
For the same homely style should still yield pleasure,
Unless the judge's part be sore abused.

Why, asks he, fancy, common weapons free,
Such true poetic lances used for vice?
And why not think that they will still agree
With what can win for goodness in a trice?

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For all they say, he ends, we are not fools,
To give up at their call our honest right,
Nor shall we be confined by their sly rules,
To leave poor virtue always dull as night.

And then, defending still his want of style,
How strange, he says, to laugh down weapons bright,
Seeking oneself and others to beguile,
Still using what denotes old Pagan night,
All arms corroded with an ancient rust,
Of gods and goddesses enamour'd made,
Deeming them the best in which to trust,
Such false words used for a Toledo blade.

What pretty banners! void of sense and truth!
With Ganymedes emblazon'd Hebes near,
And deeming them the best to kindle youth!
With such a cohort nothing more to fear!
Heroic diction thought still to require,
What no man waking can ever now believe;
All inspiration from the heathen fire,
That host of phrases framed but to deceive.

So where no slime of ancient errors vain
Exists upon the arms they find around,
There's nothing that can poetry sustain,
The whole is simple prose on vulgar ground!
Let style be dress or armour if you will,
But what, if the accoutrement be all?
The finest dress demands a body still,
Else it may hang mere lumber on the wall.

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Thus a new pleasure for our knight of ink,
To think himself defending Christian art,
Because to low dull prose his style will sink,
Without a gleam from Fancy to impart.
On no point will he yield a single inch,
He thinks not e'en his verses are too rough;
He says that Pope and Dryden, at a pinch,
Can here and there demonstrate this enough.

True, unlike Virgil, he would not defame
Things, for lack of words to keep the measure;
As when poor Lupin "sad" he chose to name,
For no just cause, but just for metre's pleasure.
For reason such no truth would he forsake,
So there's the sentence gone forth to the world;
From dreaming great things he is now awake,
And from the pinnacle of hope quite hurl'd.

Yet Folly still has comfort for his breast,
Since thus he thinks he can explain their rage;
In their position he'd be like the rest,
And hold to scorners the detested page.
For what more natural can he conceive,
Than strongest wishes to consign to shame
Him who they think but labours to deceive,
The false to glorify, and truth to blame?

Yet sooth, our author's folly wounded so,
Through his wound's mouth has no self-love to blame
Those scribes from whom he will receive a blow,
As meant with good intention to reclaim.

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Unlike Oronte, and loving what's sincere,
Perhaps he thinks that genius is less rough;
But truth, however told, must still be dear,
No less when it inflicts on him rebuff.

Yet, final pleasure! he can turn his lance,
And cool against all critics boldly ride;
"Then learn," he says, "that energy's advance
Doth not scare him who can such shocks deride.
For talent may to muscle owe a fall;
Without a soul, the critic follows trade,
Heeding the market's praise as Syren's call,
And taking only money current made.

"We measure palaces along the ground;
From East to West, and North and South they lie;
For books you should another way have found,
And placed your lines but upwards to the sky[1].
Construct as if all gusts of air must last,
Deem genius what from earth alone you steal;
Dispraise all wisdom gather'd from the past,
But from your judgments souls will yet appeal.

"There are still diamonds rough and bars of gold,
So more you need than your commercial scales.
It is not merely traders' language bold,
That stamps the metal where true taste prevails.

[1] Joubert.

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No delicacy! Literature ends.
You may have force and yet a certain art,
Great nerve, and bile, and blood, as pride oft spends,
But, needed elsewhere, from these lists depart."

Such the last pleasure for our prostrate knight,
At least he rode and fought the live-long day;
His arms all plain and venom'd with no spite,
His protest he declares, and limps away.
Not crest-fallen either; stalking from the field,
He still has visions floating in the sky,
His course, a failure, still may elsewhere yield
What he deserves not when he comes to die.

But cease, O Muses! cease the plaintive lyre,
Alas, it is not tears poor authors see,
But as if downright mirth it could inspire,
In laughing at them all will now agree.
Let laughter peal; but still they nothing fear,
Undaunted confidence holds up their heart;
Abash'd at least they never will appear,
But take the moral ere I now depart.

Erasmus once in praise of Folly wrote;
All that he says is pleasant and quite true;
But authors' silly ways he does not note,
Fearing perhaps you'd say himself he drew:
Omitting thus the chief and foremost thing,
This was forgetting Folly's choicest food,
This was the play of Lear without the king,
This was to pass in silence half its good.

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For mark, from authors' folly what must flow;
No kind can ever more prolific be,
Than this so harmless which is found to grow,
Ceaseless, abundant, as you see in me.
Others in peace may keep their folly's store,
While he, elated with his own dear whim,
Leaves them all tranquil and purloins no more
The whims of others, folly pure for him.

Others their follies will bring forth to light,
Constraining all to view them on their way,
An author's folly need afflict no sight,
In fact he only shows it when you pay.
Close but his book, or elsewhere turn your eyes,
At least his folly will not cost a tear;
With all who see him he can pass for wise,
His worst offences cannot then appear.

And all the while no greater mischief he
Devises, works, effects throughout the land;
And what a great good this itself can be,
You who reflect can clearly understand.
One mar-plot less, one vain intriguing wretch,
Changed to a harmless, self-contented wight,
Just fancy, and your whole conception stretch,
The good is positive to purblind sight.

Then do for ever let such folly reign;
'Tis like the useful bird in wood and field;
Your critics without souls, like boors, complain,
But public service it will ever yield;

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Consuming noxious things that would devour
More than the blossoms or the leaves on trees,
True pests removing from each private bower,
At least from one foe it such circles frees.

SERENE HOURS.

THE world is—no matter what; let it spin,
But leave it an instant and fly;
There ever is silence quite near us to win,
Where its humming we can defy;
In feelings alone finding ample defence
Against all that assails our ears with pretence.

The eagle can soar to the blue mountain steep,
The swan to its islet can float,
Tiny wren from its nest on the branch can peep,
And we can escape—in our boat;
While before and around we see what we love,
Changing noises of earth for tones from above.

On the shore reigns good humour in men and boys,
Yet still there's such chaffing and play,
That the rich English gift which there each enjoys
Can't prevail on the swans to stay.
To remain in the mock fight of mine and thine,
There are hours in summer when they decline.

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We men, too, are bipeds that like the gay throng,
Though, in truth, we are sometimes shy,
And prefer to hear warbled a sweet little song,
Quite contented with seeing pass by
In the blue stream of barges, or lined on shore,
Far off, those who nearer delight us no more.

The lowly, I know it, have no cause to fly
From the streets and the busy crowd,
For nought that confronts their careless glad eye
Will frighten or make them grow proud;
A step or a hand-basket yielding a seat,
While sly they can chat with a gay comrade sweet.

A pigeon, tame raven, a dog, or a cat,
Proves a theme for frolic so gay;
While joyous or steady, on this thing or that,
They could talk the whole live-long day.
For having to keep up no cumbersome state,
E'en at shop doors they think and can contemplate.

But we, we, O ye Muses! in station such
That fills us with silly vain fears,
Must nothing that's common be e'er seen to touch,
To derogate in what appears—
As stuck-up we saunter on through the rich train,
Fellow-slaves yet inflicting mutual pain.

For all pride will breed pride, and folly folly,
Each striving to hit the right thing—

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With sadness feeding our dull melancholy,
Gluing fast the poor soul's sick wing
So as never to rise above circumstance,
Or train our heart gaily to sing out and dance.

Let us leave all the din, and bustle, and glare,
Let us speed to the limpid wave,
On which there is rest for a moment from care,
With nothing to dread or to brave;
No harsh disaccordance in aught that we see
With whatever we love so mysteriously.

But not like the eagle, companionless, sad,
We speed all alone and dreary,
For such solitude grim is both proud and bad;
And we need what cannot weary—
The tones and the looks that reveal a soft heart,
Which the lost joys of Eden again impart.

See! the swans that love mankind will thus retire
But in pairs to some rushy pool,
Of the wherries and touters and noise they tire
And seek some green hiding-place cool,
Sequester'd, all silent, translucid, yet near,
In which the bright tints of the sky will appear.

Let us dwell with the reeds when we cease to row,
Live-long days I there could afford
To sit watching the pace of the cows so slow
As they follow across the ford.

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'Tis music to hear but the clear ripple pass
Through cresses that bend to the feet of the lass.

Oh! what peace on the Thames, as we glide along
By the islands and osiers green,
Where the only sound heard is a faint soft song,
And nothing but beauty is seen
In the weeds of the bank and the water flowers,
In the tall bending reeds, too, that make such bowers.

Let famed schools be honour'd, and college as well;
All right, when in both you are taught;
But if you would have me a small secret tell,
'Tis the boat that's the place for thought:
As it floats down the stream or rests by the shore,
Enraptured, yet tranquil, you think all the more.

And your thought in such moments no limit knows;
Though the true, and the good, and fair,
Are still the distinctions the schoolman bestows,
But things undivided are there.
For leisure deliver'd from all that deceives,
A mirror mysterious both raises and leaves.

Now a sense of the beautiful comes like spring;
Then the spirit of youth returns;
Of Nature in all her true features we sing,
While the heart glad with pleasure burns,
Feeling sure that joy was intended to flow
As a tonic at times in this life below.

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Then, too, as destructive of all that's serene,
Nature feels from vice it should fly,
While from worldliness, too, so lofty and mean,
We recoil, although not knowing why,
Unless that through instinct we know it must kill
The germ of each noble and generous will.

So when such is the tone of this peaceful hour,
'Tis the whole human race we love;
The brown boat or the bank is a lover's bower
For all who are taught from above
To like those who pass just as dearest brothers,
And to curse whatever this feeling smothers.

'Tis then woman appears as from God's own hand,
Created to bless and to guide—
To be merry, and holy, and sweet, and bland,
And to sit just so by our side,
Restraining what is not both beauteous and good,
As by Nature perceived, and so understood.

Then, too, what like flowers we love from the heart,
Is common, free, daily for each;
And thinking of this will a charm impart,
And the love of what's common teach—
That taste which to real true genius belongs—
The wisdom of schools while the sweetness of songs.

Dissolved thus in feeling's bright noblest pure glow,
Of justice the sense we must gain,

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Of tolerance also, while with them will grow
What can our loved country sustain—
Sweet loyal contentment, and high ardent zeal
For the peace and the good of the common weal.

But tolerance here merits more than a word,
So gentle, indulgent, and sweet,
From whose lips no harsh epithet ever is heard,
But pity that looks like deceit,
As when Fenelon plain words would not employ
For faults he ascribed to the long war of Troy.

But mind reigns triumphantly, ruling us then,
Yet humble, when questions too deep
Would attempt to transgress the limits of men,
By a wild path of danger steep.
We turn from pedantry and men over wise,
Though too narrow in view well to criticize.

Then 'tis now that we feel how shallow are those
Who pretend they can all things know;
Omniscient, I think, they would have us suppose
All those who have words to bestow;
As if always ignorance should not be found
In those whose instruction is solid and sound,

Instead of an ignorance haughty and loud,
Of itself, too, quite unaware—
Instead of a knowledge most fearfully proud,
Which no doubt of itself can bear—

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Both often the offspring of modern schools,
Where a scorn of past times ever rules.

The Thames boasts of pupils who all this reverse,
With ignorance ready to float,
But aware of it too, made just the inverse
With knowledge the while in their boat;
Of which they're unconscious while passing along,
With joys that to old-fashion'd training belong.

Yet greedy of knowledge, with frank open tone,
They love and will fondly respect
Those who they think most instruction own,
And from whom they true fruits expect,
Still glowing with ardour for what may be best,
But peaceful and leaving all others at rest,

Not as tyrants imposing their tastes and loves
On all who around them are there—
But of him who a different type approves,
Judging ever impartial, fair,
Reaping felicity calm, constant, and true,
From what they know not, and from what they well knew.

Oh, sports of gay youth on the sparkling stream,
How serene you can make the soul,
Thus causing dull pedants to pass like a dream
Or the clouds that from dawn will roll;
Leaving a clearness of azure deep
O'er streaks of glory that darkness sweep!

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But if man is to feel a true happy rest,
From some errors he must be clear,
Imbued, too, with what is the brightest and best,
And with no false religion near;
Whether it springs up from excess in what's right
Or, in way more direct, from delusive light.

For such piety, harsh, and gloomy, and stern,
Would then soon put to flight each joy;
And protesting 'gainst truth, you soon would discern
How the weapons you must employ
Are all more adapted for daily mad strife,
Than for training and shielding a holy life.

So while careless at ease thus, and feeling blest,
Still you drift in your tiny boat,
'Tis to shores where is grown the balm of true rest,
You will feel yourself drawn to float,
Where the old rock of faith invites your poor feet,
So crown'd then with what is both glorious and sweet.

But now all the while, too, how distant and faint
Die away harsh echoes that rend
The hearts that abhor the dark, vile, cruel taint
That oft needlessly pains a friend,
By leaving the holy and sweet wisest line
That will the true moderate always define.

So bathed in the bliss of sweet Nature around,
Where in each smallest thing that you see,

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The measure aye holding, just medium is found,
Still strong, yet with soft mystery;
Then the wrath of immoderate man appears
But a poisonous fountain of crimes and tears.

Yet, while all these soft holy affections grow—
Oh, there may be a bleeding heart;
And some tears may be ready to overflow,
For the dearest of friends must part!
And death may have enter'd a sweet happy home,
And sent you, like me, thus to think and to roam.

Ah well, then at last, if not ever before,
Now resign'd too, you feel your soul;
There above, you well know that tears flow no more,
Where is seen with such joy the whole.
All the griefs that afflicted you fled and past,
Merely steps to the joy that will ever last.

No sorrow our nature can ever assail,
That yieldeth not also a spring
Of feelings in which the sublime can prevail
With high beauty our souls to wing.
Affliction, says Joubert, joys will not destroy,
If rightly to use it our thoughts we employ.

Oh, plenitude! vision already complete!
By the true faith to you thus given,
What have you on earth now with terror to meet,
When for you there remains but Heaven?

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To love the good God and the Father of all,
And in mind at His feet with your hopes to fall.

What exists that men grieving can wish for more,
Than in love to bathe their fond hearts
In that great deep love which can fully restore
All that never again departs?
'Tis a hymn that will rise from the sparkling stream,
For time, with its changes, has pass'd like a dream.

Oh, haven serenest, for thee now our praise,
Though seeming for children and youth,
That can thus the sad soul above earth's clouds raise,
To soar high up to love and truth!
From us may these glorious broad wings nothing sever,
Then true gladness and peace will be ours for ever.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT,

IMITATED FROM THE FRENCH.

It is true, for an instant I leave
All your great problems profound;
For these monsters silk reins you can weave,
Your wheels need not touch the ground.

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I alight from your high Griffin's car;
To-morrow all shall be known;
No more mysteries thenceforth shall jar,
Your strophes will them disown.

But to-day the proud eagle may fly,
And see me here in the plain;
It is Twickenham, not Egypt that's nigh,
Nor shall you hear me complain.

I am now for the swan and the wave,
The lilies white on the stream,
With bright June and all joys that we rave,
In smiles of midsummer's dream.

Grim enigmas and horrors farewell,
Portentous—the black, the blue,
As, when scared, of a nightmare we tell,
And fancy all may be true.

Your deep questions, lugubrious, vast,
That infinite darksome abyss,
Speculations ignoring the past,
Which now on no path we miss;

My long studies on convicts, their works,
How to draw best in a sieve,
On the schemes of the Russians and Turks,
I stop it all.—Let us live.

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I adjourn things slily with winks;
I look at reports and scoff;
And I say to the terrible sphinx,
I speak to the rose—be off.

But, sage Gravity, sigh not, I say;
For the green wood draws me so!
I must hear laughing to-day,
Whatever gruff voice says No.

With bright April, the Portress of Spring,
I needs must now talk awhile,
Would you have me your articles bring
To her lodge, our time to beguile?

Must I gravely consult with the rose
On highest matters of state?
Do you think that the wild bee knows
How to solve questions of fate?

Must I terrify elms and limes,
The willows and osiers slight,
With your problems that frighten *The Times*,
O'er the nests of small birds bright?

Mix the darkest abyss with the shrub,
Doubts with the hawthorn-tree,
What! and have me the flowers to snub?
No; that's not a task for me!

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Upon questions that patience will try,
As seen by man in his gloom,
Shall I call on the lark in the sky
To answer as in your room?

When the pretty maid passes along,
Singing so blithe and so gay,
Must she give up her sweet little song,
To hearken to what you say

Upon questions that never will end,
Objections that you think new,
On reports all things human to mend,
On all you fancy untrue?

From good sense, then, a hundred leagues off
I should be, if with you there;
At us both, then, forsooth she might scoff,
And I can't her friendship spare.

THE OSIER BANK.

Beneath this willow's chequer'd shade
The stream itself is somewhat staid;
The boat can rest along the land,
While needing but a gentle hand,
From time to time, to catch a flower
When it would drift out from the bower

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Cool, with green branches over head,
And fragrant more than can be said.
The bank with weeds of every sort
Enrich'd, invites you to its "port."
For Fancy still must be employ'd,
If what you see is well enjoy'd,
And so "a port," you think and say,
Receives you on the watery way;
The rushes are a stately grove
Of trees through which you wish to rove;
The muddy banks are cliffs on shore.
Of sights like these you have a store—
The quays, thus lined with what is pretty,
Projecting roots have form'd a jetty,
Beyond which eddying flows so strong
The stream which erstwhile tired long—
Still you can see it cool and blue,
So tempting while repelling you.
Among the osiers straight and tall,
Hop, perch, and sing the birdies small;
The ants, so busy on the grass,
Give warning unto all who pass
With naked legs prepared to bathe
And try the sparkling rapid wave;
The minnows press, and dart, or stay,
Just in their old accustom'd way;
Your fair companion cools her hand,
Half fearful of the frog on land,
That glares with restless staring eyes,
From caves that cause her much surprise.

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High in the air above will sing
The lark with its untirèd wing;
The thrush, the blackbird, warble near,
They do so sing! each little dear.
White down is wafted by the breeze
(The rhyme is hackney'd) from the trees
Of poplar, all whose leaves so tremble,
As if they would their crime dissemble;
And what that was, I need not say
To those who know the ancient lay.
Low on the planks you stretch along,
And your companion sees no wrong.
The gentle ripple smites the boat,
And all combines to make you dote
Upon the hour, the sights, the sounds,
That float from those sequester'd grounds,
Upon the eyes with yours that see
How all is grace, sublimity,
All sweetness, beauty, wisdom, love,
Conferr'd on you by God above.
Nothing on earth can then compare
With all that's felt by such a pair.
What bold free figures do they use,
Doing and saying as they choose!
Their lip-dew even call'd to speak,
When words alone are felt but weak.
Doubt that I love? The quick reply
Addresses both the ear and eye:
A finger wetted, quickly dried,
Then quite across the neck applied,

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While to denote you are her pet,
You're ask'd at first to see the wet,
Then it is said, and now the dry,
So pray cut this, if now I lie.
All stunn'd by such an action free,
The whole is like a mystery,
A trick of love, symbolic sign,
To say that "you alone are mine."
Let critics laugh; they're far from us
With all their pedantry and fuss,
Calling out for poetic diction,
For on words their hearts are set on.
But what care we for rules and laws,
For all these literary saws?
Enough for us to feel and sing,
Admiring still each tiny thing.
Enough! nay, for we need much more—
Of deepest thoughts we want a store.
We think of others left at home,
When to the river we would roam;
We praise their talk, their ways, their looks,
Which teach us more than many books;
We think of some who now are dead,
And love them more than can be said;
To unseen worlds though fled away,
With us somehow they seem to stay,
And follow too where'er we stray.
We think how gracious, kind, and good,
Were those who once so near us stood—

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Alas! we well may say so near,
And then in mind we think a tear.
We think of joys together past,
Of griefs that to the end would last,
Of music that they play'd or sung,
Of words familiar to their tongue,
Of stars they loved to name and show,
Of all that once pass'd long ago.
But sunshine, youth with warmest heart,
To every thing can joy impart.
Our friends in life or death we see
As heirs of immortality;
And then will sound the grandest tone
That human bosoms ever own,
For then we hush the plaintive sigh,
And lift our hearts to God on high,
And think it happiness to die.
No words are spoken, but the speech
Of souls is heard where all thoughts reach;
The fair one and the other feeling
What is too deep for tongue revealing.
So thus they sweetly take their rest,
As if inspirèd both and blest;
Though you might think them out for play,
Like others on a holiday.
But moments such as these are gone
Before their worth you think upon;
It is beyond this life they last,
Whither still all are speeding fast.

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Let go the flower! to the stream!
Once there, all this will seem a dream.
Harbour of refuge, sweetest port,
To which each spring I would resort,
With grateful hearts we say adieu!
Thinking on what we gain'd from you.
For such a moment can suffice
To heal the wounds of stupid vice,
With love to make the heart o'erflow,
And every grace within it grow.
To love mankind we must have leisure,
Laugh if you will—a day of pleasure;
And to love God—that charm calm,
That fragrant, healing, holy balm,
These birds, these weeds, these osier bowers,
These insects, and these sparkling flowers,
These blue and white and tiny spots,
Though all are but forget-me-nots,
As if to tell your sweet fond friend
That love like yours can never end—
This look from a responsive heart,
All can that best of gifts impart.
But come, pray let me take the oars,
No human spirit always soars.

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KENSINGTON GARDENS.

Off to the park, to the drive, to the row,
All right, just so, let it be;
But grief, though no tears may be seen to flow,
Will sometimes steal over me,

Thinking of days once so gamesome with fun,
When, children, you loved the shelter,
Through shades, down slopes, 'midst the rushes to run,
Speeding on so helter-skelter.

The sunny grass, and the sweet silent grove
Want nothing more that can please,
When chatting or marking onward you rove,
Or frolicking at your ease.

These spots picturesque, sequester'd, and fair,
Are full of ideal charm;
All that is wild and romantic seems there,
If your eyes and ears you arm,

Not to see, not to hear, the world around,
Passing with noise in the park;
And then what you dream of is to be found,
While sweet coy Nature you mark.

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On the drive are chariots open and shut,
Amazons frowning so bold,
Dames who consent on their own feet to strut,
And young men just like the old.

But here, within stone-throw, Nature you see,
You hear her melodies sweet;
'Tis here that will come the joyous and free,
Whose playthings are voice and feet.

Innocent sports of the fifteen years old,
Shades sacred with foliage deep,
'Tis Liberty reigns here, hearty and bold,
While all sad dull passions sleep.

Oh, freshness of laughter, and joy so pure,
When Nature alone is sought,
When genuine mirth she loves to allure
With charms that cannot be bought!

'Tis solitude's school, under Heaven's blue,
Where birds that sing on the tree,
Suffice to bring Nature's great Lord to view,
And prove His presence to me.

Let splendours of life pass yonder with sound,
Low company here I seek,
I mean with the daisies, on verdant ground,
Ever so sprightly and meek.

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No varnish or jewels will dazzle here,
Moss is the velvet for all,
The seat is on branches that droop so near,
No climber need dread a fall.

A crowd I too love—a street is a home,
But only when owning toil;
Not when, reclining, the proud ones will roam,
Intent all nature to spoil.

'Tis said by the wise that life is a dream,
But no; the world is real;
While Fancy elsewhere makes common things seem
Invested with beauty ideal.

What is more real in one sense than pride,
The poison which blights the flower,
Infecting the world on every side,
A visible tainting power?

While not to be seen is the dew that falls,
Refreshing the thirsty ground;
And when it is absent, see what befalls
The dry parched-up grass around.

O Fancy, sweetest companion for youth,
Thou fairy with magic wand,
Though unseen, like dew, thou canst open truth,
And cheer us when we despond,

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Thou fliest the halls of the foolish proud,
Preferring a hollow tree;
Thou hatest the haughty and pompous crowd;
So thou art comrade for me.

Then into the hollow tree let us all creep,
And hark to the thrush that sings;
Like wrens let us hop to its branch and peep,
And mark all the quiet things

That glide and that twitter, or lie still at rest,
On blades, on motes that you see,
Created, surpassing in beauty, best,
Fraught for observers with glee.

Let others keep far with their airs and tone;
I seek not them to provoke;
But we, for the nonce Hamadryades grown,
Refuse to quit our old oak.

Still let them roll and show equipage grand,
'Tis sadness they try to cure;
But while sweet Fancy is at our command,
We have joys that will endure.

Childhood! blest childhood, oh stay with us then,
Remain, that we may be free;
Mere children in heart, though women or men,
Children in sorrow and glee.

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Like children to brush away selfish cares,
  Like them to live by the heart,
Never desponding, however time wears,
  To feel maturity's dart:

That dart all so feather'd with brightest things,
  Like the name alone of friend,
Or of love that has only sharpest stings,
  Or of joy with time to end.

With hopes of long happiness here below,
  Of connexions thought so sure
A life of prosperity to bestow,
  The fancies of youth to cure.

O childhood, come back then with gentle wing,
  That we may yet once more feel
The joy that will have no sad bitter sting,
  Making tears down faces steal.

Avaunt life's cares and its dark brooding thought,
  As if aught was worth a tear,
Which centres alone where the world is sought,
  And all its phantoms appear.

But hover around us, O visions fair,
  That once so smiled on our youth,
Then we shall triumph, however we dare
  To give up the rest for truth.

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LOVE'S VEXATIONS.

To hear some poets, you would say
That Love upon this earth could stay;
That here were only myrtle bowers,
Glad to receive us in all hours;
That amidst griefs of every sort
There ever was a peaceful port,
In which your head could aye be laid,
Beneath a sweet and fragrant shade;
That nought was wanting but a will,
To find Love happy, playing still.
But all these strains are sheer deceit,
Me to entice, and wrong, and cheat.
For if the sober truth be known,
There's nothing always there you own.
Love's transport for a day can last,
But on the morrow it is past.
Not, sooth, that any one does wrong,
But that to chance it does belong,
If what you love will ever stay,
Or, like a dream, will pass away.
I sing of what I truly know;
But yesterday the whole pass'd so.
The face, the figure, vision bright—
'Twas nothing human in my sight,

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Until, descending from that sky,
And wanting cherries ripe to buy,
She dived in pockets through her gown,
And brought up coppers dingy brown.
Reality, no doubt, has law
Upon its side; but what I saw
Sent goddesses at once to flight,
Though there remain'd a pleasing sight.
A charm so tasted, all seem'd true,
But ever something will ensue
To keep at distance and apart
Those two who seem the same at heart.
The vision lasts but for a day,
The morrow claims your ancient way,
Of feeling left in crowds alone,
To fret your heart and make your moan.
The world is both most sly and cruel,
For malice always finding fuel;
Sinistrous, like an evil star,
Its pleasure seems to be to mar
The projects of poor silly man,
Still seeking gladness while he can;
For youth, indifferent and cold,
While keeping laughter for the old,
To crush and pulverize their hope,
Who never wish'd it to provoke.
Besides, it tangles nature round,
And leaves nought easy, plain, or sound;
'Tis skilful Love itself to scare,
Whatever you may wish or dare.

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But say that absence need not be
Between the two who so agree;
Yet there will come the wants and grief
From which for days there's no relief.
'Tis troubles, cares, and nothing sure,
To promise bliss that will endure.
Of what avail the present hour,
If something for the next will lour?
We cannot smile the day away,
If tributes to dull care we pay.
What skills it to see roses growing,
When some grief is still o'erflowing?
The laughter lasteth never long,
For something interrupts the song;
No longer playful, even free,
It is quite sad for all to see
How much disquietude can reign
Where things appear'd so smooth and plain.
The morning did not seem to lour,
And yet we're caught ere vesper hour;
For tempests come, and not foretold,
But unannounced to young and old.
Alas! 'tis for a moment's span,
That Love itself will stay with man.
I fear he sometimes verifies
What to disprove our wit defies.
The ancient poets call him little,
We need not change these words a tittle;
It is an urchin without thought,
With trinkets often he is bought.

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He'll stay with you while you can show
That something's left you can bestow ;
But when you talk of cares and trouble,
He vanishes in air, a bubble ;
Or else he'll chide and take his leave,
With some one else his webs to weave.
I do not think him always wrong,
For that would shame a poet's song.
I think the fault within you lies,
When you affect to feel surprise ;
For the poor child is sensitive,
And with your faults he cannot live ;
So when they prove too great for him,
He leaves you, when you think it whim.
You see him running from your door,
However him you may implore ;
He spreads his wings and flies away,
No longer with you will he stay.
He wants, whatever you may think,
An air that will not spirits sink ;
He wants true goodness in your breast,
A heart contented and at rest.
For without leisure, dalliance kind,
Nothing quite suits his sportive mind ;
And finding you the serf of care,
He's gone before you are aware.
Then since we know our faults too well,
We cannot wholly trust his spell.
So let us treat him as a boy,
And seek a far more steady joy,

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Seek a sure friend that will remain,
And of our troubles not complain,
Who, when we're sad and down in heart,
Will have some pleasure to impart;
Docile and patient, constant ever,
To leave us in our sorrows never.
But where can such a love be found?
You need not look above, around,
For Him with eyes you cannot see;
But He is close to you and me—
The real, true, and constant Love,
Who reigns with seraphs there above,
Your sweet and truest friend to be
Through ages of eternity.
Yet think Him not too high, austere,
To tolerate another near.
Invisible Himself, He knows
How innocence what's seen bestows;
And even Love, that urchin lad,
Whom too I think not always bad,
When He is with you, won't grow sad.
So think they both can well agree
In perfect, sweetest, harmony.
I pray you, be not much surprised;
But Love may be too subtilized.
If Love then comes, don't close the door,
He'll only feel delighted more
To find thus with you Him who gave
The means his tiny self to save

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From all that made him fly with fear,
Lest what he loathes to you were near.
This true Friend wishes here to stay,
Just in his old familiar way;
Nor deem that He is far too high
Your wants unmention'd to descry;
Too great to feel for what is little,
Of which you dare not breathe a tittle;
Too pure not to disdain and hate
What pleases in your present state.
Absurd vain man, He made your heart,
Then never, never from Him start;
He gave what you need never name,
Since He too meant there should be shame;
He meant you to be wise but merry,
So all your fear is nonsense very.
Love Him, and treat Him as a friend,
Your love will thenceforth have no end:
Soft Love will only frolic more,
And find no cause to fly your door.

MOMENTS OF JOY.

THERE are moments of joy one never forgets;
Why—no hard-headed, dull, plodding man can say,
But their light is a sun that for us never sets,
Though the winter of life will rage on and stay.

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Your boat has been pull'd to a green rushy shore,
You sit on the bank with your friend at your side,
Those minutes from memory pass never more,
For you still enduring—they sleep but abide.
Oh! why did we rise up and bid them adieu?
We knew not how precious their presence that day,
Which nothing in time could restore and renew,
While giddy we left them to ramble away.
But charms had sunk down to the core of our heart,
Their mystical sweetness must ever remain
Imprinted, indelible, not to depart,
Though all but themselves should prove sorrow and pain.
It was not the flowers, the calm, or the rest,
It was not the river so tranquil and blue;
The magic came all from the sweet loving breast,
That echoed responsive to all that you knew.
Oh, what must be therefore the joy of that place
Where souls that can love will be join'd evermore,
Where present, celestial, will shine the dear face,
And thenceforth you're call'd not to leave that bright shore?

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THE SMALL HOUSE.

(AN IMITATION.)

THE worldly may boast
Of their rich splendid host,
That will fawn on them while they're in sight;
But you and I, unknown,
Perhaps still are more prone
To consort with the lovely and bright.
Yes, Annie,
For, being unknown,
Whom so few can own,
All the apter are grown
To consort with the lovely and bright.

The hall may be grand,
With all things at command
That can pamper and dress out dull ease;
But the small cheerful house,
With scarce room for a mouse,
Can still shelter, and hide too, and please.
Yes, Annie,
The smallest low roof
That keeps pride all aloof
Can soon yield ample proof,
That it is not its smallness can tease.

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The rich may dilate
On each thing with great state,
And be purely correct in their speech;
But the merry and fond,
Less confined by dull bond,
Can your arch sprightly language best teach.
Yes, Annie,
The soft and the fond,
Less fast bound by strict bond,
Which makes pedants despond,
Can the hearts of the cheerful best reach.

Proud station enslaves,
And no heart ever saves
From constraint which right irksome must grow;
But the lowly are free
To enjoy all the glee
That our nature can feel and bestow.
Yes, Annie,
Like birds on the tree,
In a nest none can see,
Ever merry, believe me,
We shall each day find proof it is so.

The great have no leisure
For the things of pure pleasure,
Such as lovers think vistas of heaven;
But all those who don't want
To seem grand and to flaunt,
Are screen'd from each drop of that leaven.

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Yes, Annie,
With no one to pry,
So malicious and sly,
As if no one were by,
We're merry each day of the seven.

Some folk learn'd are wise,
So them none need advise,
For within they see nothing to mend;
But with us while at home,
Or when laughing we roam,
On a priest we love always to tend.
Yes, Annie,
For we who feel wants,
Care not snaps for stale taunts,
And, whatever their vaunts,
We welcome the priest as our friend.

The house that is small
Can be swept quickly all,
But old Beelzebub glides every where;
So that one who knows well
All the marks of his spell,
Indeed, sometimes to us should repair.
Yes, Annie,
Eyes vigilant round
Should sweep all the ground,
Lest some bits may be found
Of the devil's own paving-stones there.

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The devil walks near,
Any thing will appear,
But a jeweller mostly to girls;
Quite calm and polite,
He hooks with what's bright,
Until we're all caught in his whirls.
So, Annie,
The nest on the tree,
Like what I've with thee,
Which we dote on to see,
Needs high Heaven to guard all its pearls.

The wise may know more,
Having all their great store
Of grave matters quite above others;
But the simple and true,
Who keep honour in view,
Have no art that consciences smothers.
Yes, Annie,
Unseen by the eye
That the heart will defy
And its nature deny,
We'll follow the ways of our mothers.

The high are supplied
With what oft is denied
To those on whom Fortune looks pale;
But what's venison or grouse
To this love of a house,
In which Nature can reign and prevail?

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Yes, Annie,
Our filberts so small
Contain diamonds all,
As in bright Fairy's hall,
Where you find nothing vapid and stale.

Then, Envy, avaunt!
Fly now far from our haunt,
It is we that are favour'd and free;
While, arch thing, pray believe
That I do not deceive,
Saying, you are the world for me.
Yes, Annie,
We're both far too shy,
When pretensions we spy,
Not then elsewhere to fly,
To find round us just what we would see.

BEAUTY.

THE love of beauty on this earth
Might every instant take its birth
From the least mite we see,
If only we would learn to trace
The moulding of each lovely face
In rarest harmony.

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Oh, beauty is a glorious light!
Surpassing all the untold might
  Of human words or thought;
Like a bright envoy from the sky,
Revealing what will never die,
  Though to our senses brought;

Mysterious beauty ever near,
Which must to every eye appear,
  That opens with a soul;
A glimpse of what is found above,
In regions of celestial love,
  Where spirits view the whole.

Who sees the sun about to rise,
With rosy tints that can surprise,
  As if unknown before;
The Loire then ready to receive
The dazzling gleams that it will leave,
  'Midst pale blue groves on shore;

Deep groves, as if on porcelain seen,
With fairy castles still between,
  One tone of pale blue light,
Until the bar of glory comes,
Lighting up heights all crown'd with domes,
  The plain still grey with night—

Who sees this, feels a force divine,
That causes inwardly to shine

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A radiance of bright love;
It is not earth he now surveys,
It is not landscape wins his praise,
He feels himself above.

Who sees that water's tender shade,
Those islands, groves of poplar, made
To beautify the stream,
Feels as if all were in his mind,
A vision more than you can find,
Excepting in a dream.

Bright early dawn! sweet evening sky!
Let the skill'd artist only try
To imitate thy charm.
Succeed he may, as far as art
Can an ideal type impart,
And critic's sense disarm;

But the fresh, limpid, pure bright glow
Which makes us feel transported so,
He merely has to own—
The hills, the slopes, the sunlit white
Of buildings that can cheer the sight
With windows open thrown,

The smiles from balconies so fair,
The flowers that embalm the air,

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The heart's impression strong,
The distant and the near as well,
That move us with such potent spell,
Surpass all art and song.

Then see the features and the tone
Of colours art can never own
As possible to reach,
In all the beauteous human kind
Displaying glories of the mind
Which truth and goodness teach.

Yet art has beauty. Who denies?
Though God's creation still defies
The imitative skill
Of man, replete with such a store,
To make us love, admiring more,
The power of His will.

For He too wills that man should try
Still even with Himself to vie,
In art with Nature found—
The terrace with its balustrade,
The vases bright with flowers made,
The garden's fairy ground,

The marble steps, the parterre sheen,
The lake and cascade seen between

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The groves—that Eden's boast—
Are beauties that to art we trace,
Which Nature's self would not efface,
When she would triumph most.

Thus beauty, howsoe'er derived,
Of which no spot is quite deprived,
Surrounds us like the air;
To every sense revealing still
An index of our Maker's will,
To yield that essence fair.

The grove or garden is a school
Well furnish'd with effective rule
To raise our hearts on high;
To charm, transport, and teach the glad,
To comfort and console the sad,
Sustain them when they sigh.

What are the lips, the smiles, the eyes,
As if reflecting azure skies,
That speak of love alone?
No tongue, no art can e'er disclose,
As every feeling bosom knows,
The power of their tone

To speak of what is found on high
As soon as pardon'd mortals die,

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Eternally to reign:
Their hopes to raise, their tears to check,
When life on earth is but a wreck,
And all is grief and pain.

If blue hills, valleys, woods around,
If towers, convents, decking ground
That's Eden-like, so fair;
If slopes where circling forests grow,
Can make Elysium here below,
What must be beauty there?

If clouds themselves at day's decline
Show Archipelagos where shine
Isles than Greece more fair,
Show mountains with their rocky range,
Each rising with a form so strange,
Or lost in purple air,

What will it be to float above,
Where all things breathe eternal love,
'Midst orbs of glorious light;
Where beauty triumphs unalloy'd,
Where each rejoices, never cloy'd,
And bliss is only sight?

Yes, all we see around us here,
Demonstrates, with precision clear,

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The Will that is Supreme,
Which clothes with beauty what we see—
Like mirrors, showing what will be
When life's no more a dream.

Nay, how can language even scale
The heights recall'd by flowers pale,
As man's intended clime?
Bright Beauty's voice is far more clear,
To make all doubting disappear
That they are ours in time.

O Beauty, prostrate hear our prayer,
That we may be permitted there
To see thee with our soul;
Thou art eternal and divine,
Beyond all space where planets shine,
Creator of the whole.

THE RULE OF LIFE.

Far from the haunts of busy, careful men,
At least ere rails join'd places thought so then,
Crowning a range of slopes whose verdant sheen
The copse of oak adorns while spread between,
'Midst fields and hedgerows through which winds a road
Lonely and grass-grown up to the abode

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To which it leads, embosom'd as you see,
A spot of fairest English scenery,
There stands a truly venerable school,
Where the old faith supplies its constant rule.
Thither, when young, from Cambridge used to speed
One who of gravest matters then took heed.
No contrast greater could you ever find,
Than that which here was offer'd to his mind.
From haunts of men just moulding for the world,
To mediæval cloisters he felt whirl'd;
From places fraught with notions of the day,
He came to where antiquity would stay.
And yet was there still a charm in the change,
When backwards thus his thoughts began to range,
So that in later life he often saw
In his mind's eye the keepers of that law,
There still observed, as if in days of yore,
When men sought Heav'n and then but little more.
With life's strong combats wearied, seeking rest,
His thoughts reverted to those sages blest.
Finding at last how vainly he had tried
To win his objects, and how vainly vied
With others, all intent to follow far
The worldly wisdom as their guiding star,
He seem'd once more to visit that old Hall
Where the true wisdom could be learnèd, all.
It seem'd to him as if to his complaints
This answer came from one of those mild saints,—
"Once more, my friend, within these walls our guest,
I now have heard the object of your quest.

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Well, it is true, you long have lost your way,
While through the world you still would wildly stray;
But yet the cause of all your grief is clear,
And that from lips unworthy you shall hear.
To find himself, and upwards still to rise,
Was said of old to be the highest prize
That man can gain, when wishing to be free
And reap with bliss his immortality;
But words are only words, let sophists boast,
Who blindly lead you when they promise most.
We, too, ourselves would find and upwards rise;
Who seeks not this, his nature but defies.
For what is it, to find all else beside,
And reap fresh triumphs thro' the whole world wide?
We seek not then their maxims to deny,
Saying still, Find yourself, and upwards fly.
But what is solid, practical, we seek,
Not what is shadowy and verbal, weak:
Therefore we turn from the proud Pagan page,
And ask short answers from the truer sage,
Who can disclose the means to that great end,
Which all to action and to facts will tend.
How can man find himself, and upwards soar?
To tell this plainly would be somewhat more
Than sounding phrases to amaze our ears,
Awaking chiefly vague mistrust and fears.
But what by heathens, in those days of old,
Ne'er was imagined, or at least not told,
By Christian sages, wiser in their school,
Was taught and subjected to clearest rule;

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Not left a wild and visionary plan,
But made a good accessible to man.
To find yourself, and feel a perfect rest,
Renounce yourself, they said, you'll have the best.
They said,—to rise, men ever must descend,
Since each step lower caused him to ascend.
Such is their rule, and certes we can see
That quite unfailing this must ever be.
For what is it that darkens all our life
But love of self, with its mean ceaseless strife?
Renounce your part, to glory in the whole,
And then you find your true and mighty soul,
Contented, happy, strong, and ever blest,
Already reaping an eternal rest;
For then your heart and mind no longer brood
On your own griefs, that melancholy food.
If by self-losing you make others glad,
There's nothing in that loss to make you sad;
For such is Nature's never-changing law,
That no true bliss from selfishness you draw.
Romantic, visionary, seems the act,
But here the rule appeals to sternest fact;
Seek but yourself to find, yourself to please,
And the result is fatal,—a disease
Mortal, to baffle all the subtle skill
That can be used to carry out your will.
Why so, or how, we are not call'd to say;
But have it otherwise we never may.
You seek yourself? No more may now be said;
Thick night will close o'er your devoted head—

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Night all portentous, sad and noxious, cold—
In these few words the constant issue's told.
What skills it then to reason or delay,
When these are facts, not words that sophists say?
He who neglects to try and prove the rule,
Will find at last that he has been a fool,
Employ'd by senseless phantoms of his brain
To work, contrive, and finish all in vain.
But then to rise must be the aim of man;
Such it has been since first his race began.
Granted, indeed; but how is he to rise?
Here the great secret will not few surprise.
Each step he takes in true humility,
Proves a step upwards to be high and free:
From life around this fact you cannot sever,—
We rise to fall; we sink to rise for ever.
Say if you will, 'tis glorious to aspire,
But vain proud men can never ascend higher.
Climb for a day they may, resembling apes,
Appearing then in sundry countless shapes,
But even men their movements will deride,
Descrying all their littleness and pride;
Sooner or later they will have a fall,
Which will the wary and the just appal.
Though even if they reach the utmost top,
There, within sight, must all their fond hopes stop.
And what is it on tongues of men to soar,
If fame be all the end, and nothing more?
Oh, the small height for wondrous glorious man,
Which reaches but to this life's little span!

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Condensed a little ether or a space—
That space a point—it is the world you trace;
And man to think that rising in his sphere,
Is like a mite to shine and disappear!
When, sinking now, he might have pass'd the skies,
And soar'd aloft with joy that never dies!
Be it then ours to take the downward way
Which leads to summits of supernal day,
Higher than all the stars that we can trace,
Revolving ever in the wondrous space;
Higher than thought itself can upwards soar,
To see all good and live for evermore."

Thus spoke the sage with accent calm and kind,
Such as denotes the firm capacious mind,
Prepared by learning vast and manifold,
Versed in new channels, as in wisdom old,
The whole of life's experience to make known,
The facts of which no hearer could disown.
They parted; and the stranger in his thought
Still his accustom'd ways and habits sought;
But yet an echo linger'd in his heart
Which caused him not despairing to depart.
How smooth and easy the ascent thus shown!
What peace, no longer striving for his own!
Why, even Love the same rule will announce,
And call on men their own selves to renounce,
Rather than blight the opening flower fair,
That sheds a perfume on the ambient air.

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What though the rest of life but sad appears?
At least, the future will awake no fears.
Here we may sigh, and falter, and despond,
But elsewhere will be happy all the fond,
Who gave up self, and triumph'd but to see
How some they loved, they left still happy, free.
Yes, then let's humbly walk; let self retire,
Inflamed we shall be with an inward fire,
To purify what's sordid and what's vile,
What can the best and noblest mind beguile,
And to produce a force of wondrous might,
Working beyond our feeble human sight,
To make the creature of a little day
Vanish, while in its place will glorious stay
A bright soul mounting up on wings of love,
To find itself in God on heights above,
Where heroes, lovers, saints, for ever soar,
Never to lose, or sink in sorrow more.

THE BIRD IN A CAGE.

High in a cage of shining gold,
Still perching, singing, arch and bold,
I spied a gay and pretty bird,
The sweetest songster ever heard.
With grains of every kind supplied,
With herbage all around it tied,

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With nothing that could yield it fear,
But all that's rich and splendid near;
Without a task or any need,
It only had to sing and feed.
Adored, admirèd by the fair
Who tended on it ceaseless there—
High praised, and shown to hosts of friends,
While there a life of ease it spends—
What bird more favour'd or more blest?
No other care but to be dress'd,
No wants conceivable by you,
If its true heart you never knew.
But I, a stranger, seem'd to see
In this bird's fate a mystery
Which might a human tale unfold,
If all we knew could all be told.
Methought I read within its eyes,
What yet to some would yield surprise,
That it disliked its envied lot,
And would have sought a humbler spot.
Its twinkling eye, its head that turn'd,
Seem'd to denote what inward burn'd;
And, to my joy, it seem'd to think
That I could understand its wink,
As if with me it would escape
To homely thatch or thorny brake,
While feeling want itself a treasure
That still can minister to pleasure.
As if it loved but Nature fond,
And never wish'd or look'd beyond

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The chequer'd life of pains and care,
With nought but what it well can bear—
For Nature, while she gives us grief,
Has her own secrets of relief.
Still, neither I nor bird said aught,
While thus by Nature's instinct taught,
But each had a masonic sign
The heart of other to divine;
And what to some was only sweet,
Could my own secret wishes meet.
For this bird's song was still the same
As that of others not so tame;
It sung as if in woods and fields,
Where only Nature pleasure yields,
While those who kept it were beguiled;
Within its heart it still was wild,
And all that charmèd in its song,
Was what to no cage does belong.
With all that seeming outward glee,
Its fondest wish was to be free,
To seek with diligence and skill
For what might be discover'd still
In grass, or mould, or tips of flowers,
In plough'd fields or midsummer bowers,
To seek, untended, or unknown,
For what its labour made its own,
Unwatch'd, unnoticed like the rest,
With busy days and slumbers blest,—
Preferring coarsest food to find,
To dainties from a gaoler kind.

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Better like others wild to be,
Than taste such splendid misery.
Youth of course, in bird as man,
Will look as lively as it can;
And so this captive can deceive
Those who will smile and take their leave.
It picks its corn, it has its hop,
In drawing-rooms constrain'd to stop;
It sings (what skills it to be mute?)—
Its taste all grandeur seems to suit;
But, if you mark it, you can spy,
That it has fancies on the sly,
Which never need this care and glitter,
That make its present state so bitter.
And mark, what puts me in a rage,—
That those who keep it in this cage
Are moved to love it for the cause
Which others to the greenwood draws.
Your poor, imprison'd, high-bred bird
With pleasure is both seen and heard,
For bringing to your haunts exclusive
That which is elsewhere held obtrusive,
For showing in your rooms so fine
The grace that Nature makes to shine
In wild birds gladsome, sportive, free,
Such as in common scenes you see.
Then why this pride and pious rage
To see sweet wildness in a cage?
Oh, let your bird regain the fields,
And taste what Nature ever yields—

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Then you will see it full of glee,
Contented with its liberty;
Not hung up high through fear of cat,
With wither'd groundsel, and all that—
Not with such golden rays around,
Such as in palaces are found,
Where even birds are thought to hate
Whatever does not augur state,
But hopping cheerfully through mire
As if while free it could not tire,
Bedabbled with the dew or rain,
But never seeming to complain.
And think not that your quondam pet
For human grandeur feels regret.
Your gilded rooms might make it stare,
But noise and heat it cannot bear;
It loves the fields, the trees, the sky,
Oh, let it hence away to fly!
Then it will still approach your door,
And please and entertain you more,
But one amidst the common throng
That can delight you with its song,
Not all factitious, learn'd by rote,
But warbled from its simple throat;
While you yourself more pleased must be
For putting off all cruelty,
For loving Nature unallied
With arts that merely nourish pride,
Beholding all as all was meant
When into this world sent.

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So now, high people, cease to boast
Of what, when seen, should grieve you most—
I mean the sprightly merry mood
Of young things quite misunderstood,
Obliged to borrow all from art,
As if within they had no heart—
Sweet natures, straiten'd and confined,
Although intentions all were kind;
But let all, as the common sort,
Live free, and toil, and have their sport.
For rules of life, and etiquette
Too strict, are but a loathsome net
To hamper and quite glue our wings,
All lined with matter too that stings.
Let's burst it all, and let them soar,
And seek to capture birds no more.

SPANISH MAIDENS.

Two Spanish maidens, bright to see,
In church were kneeling down;
I own it,—you may banter me,—
First caught my eyes the gown.

Each like the other, slash'd and pied,
Quite foreign in the style;
But what, though strange, can't be denied,
The maidens made me smile.

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For beauty join'd with such an air
Of piety intense,
Did somehow make all others there
Seem made up of pretence.

Their ancient lady knelt behind,
And while she mumbled prayers,
Ever anon she seem'd to find
Something amiss, in hairs,

In folds, in ribbons, knots, or flounce,
Which she would try to change;
On what was wrong she still would pounce,
And the defect arrange.

The maidens never turn'd a head;
No doubt they knew her way,
While nothing but their prayers they said,
Distract them nothing may.

Two pontiffs never could have been
More rapt with mystic looks.
I wish you only could have seen
Their eyes so on their books,

Busy and fix'd, all gravity,
No furtive glance to steal;
They seem'd to breathe authority,
And each word deeply feel.

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We English look but Christian half,
When offices are long.
I scarcely could restrain a laugh,
Amidst the solemn song;

For flabbergasted I was quite,
To see with what true ease
They bore them in the public sight,
When the least fly would tease.

No vague and vacant, senseless stare
In them an eye e'er traces;
But poring industry was there,
On those two angel faces.

What harmony was this, to find
Such thoughts and beauty bright,
The first to cheer, exalt your mind,
The last to gladden sight!

No dull disdain of what belongs
To womanhood in youth,
As if what's pretty ever wrongs
The cause of holy truth.

And yet no want of what is high,
No absence of a soul;
But knowledge that our God is nigh,
To see and hear the whole.

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O Spain, of faith and hope the land,
And blessed charity,
Thy maidens thus can understand
What's immortality.

INTERROGATION OF THE BLESSED.

Spirits glorified and blest,
Breathing now eternal rest,
Say, do ye regret the hours
Spent in fond and earthly bowers,
With a warm and constant friend,
Ready for you life to spend?
Does memory of fleeting joy
Present transports now annoy;
Was it wrong, that sprightly way,
When you smiled the live-long day?
Say, did those men speak the truth,
When they blamed your fervent youth,
When they did afflict your age,
Lingering wishes to assuage,
With words so stern of a doom
Waiting for you past the tomb,
Though you felt your conscience clear?
Does their wisdom now appear?
For that short and sportive glee,
Are you pain'd eternally?

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Hark! a peal of laughter long
Interrupts the Angels' song.
As if such notions, with their pride,
They with you will there deride.
True, they counted all your tears,
All your sorrows, all your fears—
True, they praised the courage high,
Making you regard the sky,
And they kiss'd the tears that fell,
When of Precious Blood you'd tell.
But not less they loved your soul
For beholding truth in whole.
Yes, they prized the lover's heart,
Hopes and joys, its pains and smart—
Prized that transport, though but short,
Quiet pleasure, and that sport,
Yielding to the gracious plan,
Still to nourish all the man—
All the reason and the mind,
To be merry, too, and kind,
All the faculties for love
Lighting on him from above,
All that wish to serve another,
With no self that spark to smother—
All the man, in brief, when high,
He loves good that cannot die.
Mirth, besides, was temper'd so
As to leave you also woe:
That cup for our poor lips, so sure
Wrongs of mirth itself to cure,

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Drink they saw you with the rest,
Therefore are you now so blest.
And pleasures had their thorns too,
So their sweets you did not rue.
Things they witness'd at your side,
Checking, counteracting pride,
Causing you each thing to see
With unfeign'd humility;
You were train'd that cup to quaff
When we only saw you laugh.
Gay they saw you, but the while
Saw you also without guile,
Glowing with interior fire,
Greatness, goodness, to admire,
Transports short, your struggles long—
All was worthy of their song.

Spirits happy, now at rest,
Teach us ever what is best,
With hearts grateful to sip pleasure,
Taken with discreetest measure;
With deep gratitude to be
Moved through our mortality,
Blessing God amidst the woes
Which to save us He bestows—
To have passions in control,
Using to enjoy the whole.
Then with thee in choirs above,
We will sing eternal love,

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Where is joy without sorrow,
And no fear of that to-morrow
Of which thought was here so sore,
There is wanted never more.

NATURE VERSUS THOUGHT.

On the summer's grass I lay,
In a dream to feel and stay;
Birds were singing all around,
Flowers near perfumed the ground;
Rest itself so passing sweet!
Earth and Heaven seem'd to meet.
Motionless each leaf on high
Painted seem'd on azure sky.
Sunlit streaks and deeper green
Cross'd the vistas that were seen
Stretching on to other groves,
Waiting him who farther roves.
But the heat had kept at home
Those who thither used to roam.
In that Eden only I
Seem'd its ardours to defy.
So by me what's seldom sought,
I was left alone with Thought.
Thought at times, though very well,
Oft has only grief to tell.

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Thought is a companion pale,
Loving best a pensive tale;
So perforce I had to hear
What might start the secret tear,
List'ning what she had to say
In her sad accustom'd way;
Some recalling, now no more,
Bygone things in days of yore;
For our Thought preserves a trick
To call visions rather thick—
Grieving hearts, bedewing eyes,
Taking mirth quite by surprise.
So while this one came and that,
At my side she grimly sat;
Till I would not longer stay,
Hearing all she had to say.
For though often it is sweet
Parted loves again to meet,
Though nought raises such a strain
As when they're call'd back again,
Nought to rapture is so near
As when thus they reappear,
There are moments when we dread
To think deeply of the dead.
Thought comes in through cranny small;
Enter'd once, she fills up all,
When at times we'd rather rest,
Than list even to the best.
So, since Thought would cling to me,
And my sole companion be,

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I left all the gardens fair,
In the crowd to move and stare.
Folly seem'd far sweeter food
Than such thoughtful solitude.
Nature thus provides a way,
Saying merely, "Do not stay.
I know times are when you feel;
But now hence and elsewhere steal.
You are weak; not always strong,
To bear tenderness of song."
Nature spoke, I heard her voice,
Feeling that I had no choice.
Thus she is for ever found
With words human and yet sound.
Kind and soft, she brings to man
Solace that no mere art can;
No rule follows and no law,
Causing him true peace to draw;
Somehow, with a nervous start,
When she sees too moved the heart,
Makes us rise and leave the spot
Which for us is genial not;
Silences the thoughtful breast,
And with magic wand gives rest,
Leaving Humour in its stead
To console a troubled head,
By a whim, a fancy new,
Changing what our dull thoughts drew.
For to her belongs the art
To refresh the wounded heart,

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So far as external things
Can be cured by what she brings ;
Then when she has tried her best,
True Religion does the rest.

A MIDSUMMER MEETING.

AFFINITIES of nature, some pretend,
Are things on which the joys of all depend.
'Tis best not to assent or to deny,
There's danger in the path, whate'er you try.
But of one instance harmless I will sing,
And plumed with rays a sunny way I'll wing.
For truth is truth when hearts dissolve together,
As well as when each feels a needless tether.
Let things congenial meet—you may be gone,
'Tis Nature's wish they should be thenceforth one.
In this wise age our meaning is not clear,
Since nought's elective but what's rather dear.
Affinities at which our ears we prick,
Are those unfolded by arithmetic,
When pounds seek pounds, and banks where fortunes grow
Can best reveal what "*lovers*" wish to know.

But hence, avaunt, ye spectres grim and vile !
Of things most gentle I must sing awhile.

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In life, as in your book collections vast,
For good and ill are meetings that will last.
But here are leaves, though soil'd, on which you trace
Some vital marks which time cannot efface,—
Words that seem still to burst forth without art,
Which can make thoughtful e'en the lightest heart.
How many who through life as books will stroll,
And never hear the echoes of that toll!
Who knows? the dross of mankind then may be
Struck by Love's hand to sound for charity.
'Tis certain that all int'rests can combine,
Of Heaven and those of hearts—including thine.
But hear some speak, who think they can discover
How such attractions first create the Lover.
"What silent transport dissipates my fears!"
(They say, the type of what he loves appears,)
"Bright vision, contrast to all things I hate,
Some dream commission'd, and not sent by Fate."
'Tis thus that sympathetic thoughts are there,
From trifles light as melodies in air.
But souls transparent can absorb the light
Which leaves all other objects in the night;
Then thinking to explain the sudden change,
He lets his fancy o'er what's outward range,
Portraying things in language of its own,
As more expressive than the heart alone.
"In thy kind, sprightly, sweet, and gracious face,
All that on earth I love," saith he, "I trace;
'Tis palpable to sense from the first glance,
Thy nature, golden, waits some happy chance

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To lift thee from the mine of dross and earth,
That thou to glorious form mayst give a birth.
Who could divine, as stray their wand'ring feet,
The type they sigh for men should ever meet?
Things so near as yet which want a name,
Which can our best-loved fancies even shame—
Beauty with goodness, arch and ever free,
Sense and discretion with humility.
No thought to cloud the mind, as with the vain,
Who only what is earthly seek to gain;
But looks of innocence,—no aid from art,—
An angel's form and still a woman's heart.
Spirit, fair vision, yes Midsummer's dream,
Such Love agrees with what is bliss supreme.
Let Hermas, little known, our witness be,
That this combines with Christianity.
At times man wanders lonely, without hope,
O'er earth unguided yet his way to grope.
In June the sun seems pale, no flowers fair,
Of beauty every field and garden bare.
He meets a heart like thine and all is light,
Whate'er is seen is now lit up and bright;
He now has feelings once more to admire;
For with that force thou canst him then inspire;
And sooth perhaps some purpose now is meant;
There may unknown to us be deep intent;
For mortal sense imagine never can
The arts and shapes of goodness shown to man.
Is this extravagant, seductive, new,
Of mere wild passion the distorted view?

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Nay, I must rather think it true and old,
By life's experience often seen and told.
Toinette thinks too with me when question'd so,—
Pray what does that prove, I should like to know?
Poor Angelique, though young, was not deceived,
When asking thus she the same answer believed.
The mind is sometimes stagger'd when it flies,
The heart but strengthen'd as that logic dies;
For circumstances may be ways divine
To cause in it a mystic ray to shine,
And what mere flesh and blood should never hear,
Will in the hall of souls but true appear.
Besides, results will sometimes seem to prove
That angels' ways are also ways of love—
Ways that appear to man unsanction'd, low,
Yet sometimes kindling a pure lasting glow.
The dew that falls upon the sand or rock
May well that graceless barrenness still mock;
But when it sees the flower raise its head,
It knows its mission was not vainly sped.
Thou seest a heart revived by meeting thine,
Let that suffice to make thy thoughts like mine.
Thy image fell like dew upon the field,
And love's the tribute which thou seest it yield.
Later, who knows? to show what may atone
For noxious herbage in its nature sown;
For hearts like thine can nourish the pure love
Which nought degrades but wings its way above,
To glow serenely for an endless day,
While planets sink and worlds must pass away."

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THE LOVER'S HARBOUR OF REFUGE.

Of ports of refuge you may sing,
To which in storms you steer;
I know a port for mind's rent wing,
When griefs for it are near.

To save the body is not much,
Old Plato said the same;
Remarking how our life is such,
So full of grief and blame!

Right fearful is the ocean wave,
And all may dread it well;
Yet are there storms far worse to brave,
If what we feel we tell.

Wild stormy seas endanger, fright;
Yet nature, ever grand,
Has pleasure for the human sight,
On waves or on the land.

True, death is solemn when so near,
In full life sinking down!
Yet thousands meet it without fear,
To some it yields a crown.

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Life has a wild and stormy beach,
Ports safe and charter'd, grave,
But them some cannot always reach,
Such force is in the wave.

So once, when blinded in the sea
With lightning's fiercest store,
Within a creek waves wafted me,
All shelter'd by the shore.

When mind can nothing tranquil think,
When life is drear and dark,
When spirits in its waters sink,
Here's Hope's poor little spark.

For hearts to perish! there's the cry
That fills the air with dread,
When they have but a hollow sigh,
And all within seems dead!

These are the waves men have to fear,
When life, grave, tedious, vile,
Is stripp'd of all that hope would rear,
With strength but to beguile—

'Tis then that safety bids them hail
The least-known port, though small,
Lest cold despair should quite prevail,
And darkness cover all.

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'Tis true, the rock of Honour stands,
Of all the world in view—
A glorious peak, which all commands,
Whatever may ensue.

Those cleaving to it, well I know,
May laugh at fame and fate;
Beyond the reach of waves below,
They keep a kingly state.

O ye oppress'd with mental fears,
Fly to old Honour still,
Fly to it fast when aught appears
To work or threaten ill.

That Honour suits the brave, is true;
But no time valour stays
Him who his dangers would eschew
By baseness, and betrays.

If horrid fears control your mind,
Your cowardice's rock
Is where true Honour makes you kind,
And selfish passions mock.

'Tis told you in the sacred page,
Where Peter's mighty voice[1]
Asks, Who can hurt you, if your stage
Be that of Honour's choice?

[1] 1 Epist. iii. 13.

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All this is true, supremely high;
  But still men's nature weak,
When all is saved, will breathe a sigh,
  And other shelter seek.

For bruised and batter'd with the storm,
  Although they have still glory,
They need a spot of peace, and warm,
  And ears to list their story.

They need a little port like mine,
  Quite shelter'd in a nook,
Where nature is all grace and fine,
  Unmark'd in chart or book.

The rock has saved their fame, their lives,
  Escape from ruin gain'd,
But only Honour then survives,
  And scutcheon never stain'd.

Pale, cold, and spray-wet, stark they lie,
  All stretch'd upon the stone;
They utter but a fainting sigh,
  Life's waters hear their moan.

Let friendly powers bear them thence,
  They need a calm repose,
A welcome true without pretence—
  My port all this bestows.

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Dragons and webs are here unknown,
There's nothing to conceal;
O'er all there breathes a sweet kind tone,
Which can your troubles heal.

'Tis rest as in Elysium here,
'Tis absence of all wrong
In mind, in heart, in speech, to fear,
'Tis sweetness like a song.

Reviving at kind Nature's voice,
They bless the guiding star
Which led them where they can rejoice,
From life's cold tempests far.

My Port of Nervi, thou art such,
Proud barques would deem thee poor;
From Eden thou derivest much,
Though picturesque, yet sure;

Without were passions raging high,
And making me their tool,
Mere selfishness kept gleaming by,
Unnerving to befool.

Within is calm unheard of, bright,
The beauty of the mind,
Reflected in what meets the sight,
The gracious and the kind.

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Without were mists, unwholesome, dark,
A world to freeze the veins;
Phosphoric flashes, blinding spark,
The wave itself sustains.

Within, an atmosphere of love,
A glow of early dawn,
A garden crowning heights above,
For fairies bright a lawn.

O beauteous Port upon the tide
Of life, beyond its rage,
No spot through all the world so wide
Could thus past griefs assuage.

By art not form'd, screen'd, still, and deep,
With graces to surprise,
Where all loud winds for ever sleep,
And nought with Nature vies.

With air so wholesome, keen, and bright,
Diffusing health around,
Where all that's pleasing to the sight
And to the ear is found.

For nightingale is not so sweet,
Or blackbird on the tree,
As are the accents used to greet
When I seek rest in thee.

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Oft elsewhere, wearied with a gloom
That's colourless and sad,
Where things, as if for Druids, loom
Through mists grey, cold, and bad,

We feel what's call'd "the Blue disease,"
And pant for azure clear,—
For blue above us that can please,
And blue in waters near.

A nostalgy of azure then,
Dreams of Turquoise, Sapphire
(I sing what's writ by Gautier's pen),
We feel, we court, we suffer.

No fogs obscure thy cheerful shore,
Thy azure's ever bright;
No sky Ausonian tender more,
Or fair with varied light.

Hail to the refuge of a breast
Like that which shelters, saves,—
A peaceful quiet halcyon's nest,
'Midst worse than ocean's waves.

Yes, nest, a childlike thing that floats,
All lightsome, playful, gay,
'Midst darkness on which the world dotes,
Unseen amidst its spray.

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With thee the past is but a dream
Of wrecks and woes sustain'd;
With thee hope can be seen to gleam,
The port we're bound for gain'd.

For this is woman's mission high,
To guide, restore, and save
All those who were to ruin nigh,
Upon life's stormy wave.

AN AUTHOR'S REPLY, WHEN ACCUSED OF WRITING LIGHT VERSES.

Your verses, Friend, so far from wise,
Occasion me, I own, surprise;
They're worthless and so light!
When I expected solid fruit,
Such as more both our years would suit,
And yield you prospects bright.

Grave Monitor, you might attend
To other matters you should mend,
And pass these trifles by;
For can you not reflect and see
How blossoms on each fruitful tree
Give no one cause to sigh?

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Yet blossoms merely, pink and white,
Quite worthless seem and certes light,
While sprouting from the tree,
Though no one ever then complains,
Or calls them silly, loathsome stains;
Then why so harsh on me?

'Tis true my fruit, if fruit it be,
Denotes a wild uncultured tree,
Bereft of heavenly dew—
But let not one exception prove
The law for trees ordain'd above,
In gardens old or new.

My flow'rets too are never fair,
Like those that bloom in spring-tide air,
The charm of every eye;
But sooth, no wholesome fruit you'll find
To blossom when you prove unkind,
And to remove them try.

For blossoms, colour'd all so bright,
Like poet's lines to soothe each wight
Who thinks of love and joy—
Must grow upon each good old tree,
If fruit upon it you would see,
And all its strength employ.

You censure not the oldest bark,
When sprouting from it you can mark

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A blossom such as springs
From youngest trees that by it grow,
With each so eager to bestow
Its gay and tender things.

When frosts have nipp'd these frailties light,
No fruit will later cheer your sight,
To prove the tree is good;
Then breathe not ice upon my lines,
Where only Nature ever shines,
If rightly understood.

If fruit alone be what you prize,
Their lightness should not you surprise,
Or fill you with despite;
For they are needful quite as much,
As what with hands and lips you touch
When all to you seems right.

Since love, and joy, and honour high,
Reflecting colours of the sky,
If nipp'd within the soul,
Will cause each man, in youth or age,
To stand a grief for every sage
Who contemplates the whole;

In vain you'll look for any fruit
That will our human nature suit,

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In any of life's fields,—
Abortions, sour and shrunk-up things,
Of which no saint or poet sings,
Are what his trunk then yields.

Then let bright blossoms cheer each tree
Which ever can so well agree
With fruit that's good for man;
Permit us still to sprout and sing,
And yield each loving tiny thing,
As long as e'er we can.

Since all this lightness is a part
Of that which makes a true great heart,
In man when old or young,
Let blossoms with their colours fair
Delight you long as life can wear;
And thus the truth is sung.

THE BEAUTY OF LIFE.

SWEET glorious orb, revolving amidst space,
Mysterious dwelling of the human race,
Let others mark thy planetary way,
And wond'ring tributes to thy Maker pay.
Thy seasons varied to the common eye,
While science loves their causes to descry,

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Thy hidden mines of wealth, thy min'ral vein,
Thy secret marvels that our state sustain,
With all the laws which to the whole belongs,
Might kindle highest genius in its songs.
Let others still employ their sweetest lyre
To sing of beauty which can Art inspire—
Thy fields, thy valleys, and thy winding streams,
Thy sunsets, far surpassing all our dreams,
Thy moors and hills irregularly grand,
Thy placid lakes, whose waters wide expand,
Thy purple plains, extending to the base
Of Alps, whose rosy snow spreads far its trace,
Those tracts of ice that blend into the sky,
Our feet to baffle and transport our eye,
Those blue gulfs of the sea on classic shore,
Than wider oceans which astonish more,
Those forests casting an historic shade
On sites romantic by old knighthood made,
Those gardens where the bloom of richest flowers
Disclose the tricks of Nature in her bowers,
The falling streamlet and the rushing brook,
The rocks in which a hermit finds his nook.
Let others then go on to sing of Art,
Which to this Nature can fresh grace impart—
The temples solemn, crowning rugged heights,
The feudal tower which even now affrights,
Cathedral arches with their glorious span,
To prove what wonders can be wrought by man—
And then, descending to most common things,
The village sweet of which our Goldsmith sings ;

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Or else the city, with its domes so high,
Producing wonder when you first descry
That line of old and vast ancestral art
Where beats in millions the great human heart.
Suburban beauty, so wearing forms fair,
With all the gracious workmanship that there
Can show how man has power to create
Things not unworthy of a primal state.
Let others thus describe the matchless whole
Which can by sense of beauty man control.
O blest abode, so wondrous and so fair,
Showing in all we see the Godhead there,
In forms and tints immediate from His hand,
The human heart thou mak'st to understand
The type of beauty,—revelation still
Of God's great power and His glorious will.

But all this vision, though so sweet and high,
Aspiring genius sometimes passes by,
To gaze on beauties of another kind,
Which in the world of life we ever find.
Thus Denys, the Carthusian, saw the whole,
Yet fix'd his gaze upon the grander soul.
He saw the beauty of what moves the eyes;
But what excited more his deep surprise
Was the interior beauty of our race,
Of which some features I now wish to trace,
In life's whole order as we find it still,
The docile index of its Maker's will.

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For though that will is oft renounced, defied,
Submission mostly cannot be denied;
And, what I fain would have you still observe,
'Tis not in tales that men from it can swerve
Unpunish'd; while in histories you see
The triumph oft of vile iniquity—
Which shows the latent sentiments of man
Approve what's right and have for vice their ban.
So now, while owning there is evil, wrong,
A brighter theme shall guide my timid song,
Not to conceal, as if by magic strain,
The fact of which all nature will complain,
That we are fallen from our pristine state
With lurking evil, which is past debate—
But to show also in the midst of all,
How beauty triumphs even o'er the fall;
Beauty still worthy of our love, amaze,
Yea, perhaps, often of an angel's gaze.
And what, no doubt, to some will sound more strange,
With thoughts that only here below will range,
'Tis beauty, which to name as it deserves,
An envied end of literature serves;
For only to describe it clearly well,
Would form a book like an enchanter's spell.
May the song yield of thoughts a plenteous store,
To make us love our God and mankind more.
Of men, their joys and griefs, their labours sad,
Their hopes, fears, wishes, hating still the bad,
Their goodness, tenderness, and courage great,
Their quiet virtues in obscurest state—

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To sing of these I'll touch my simple lyre,
And pray that only truth may it inspire.

And first of Joy, behold a type is near
When on the Thames you see a barque appear
With colour'd awning and with streamers gay,
With crowds of youth to grace a summer's day.
The music rolls harmonious to the land
Where with surprise you fascinated stand;
Bound to the west, she cuts her rapid way,
While the melodious harps and cornets play;
The gentle wave recedes before her prow,
And wake she leaves—I mark it even now,
As standing rapt in thought I see her glide,
Impell'd with speed against the sparkling tide.
How many happy hearts must feel the glow
That music with such movement can bestow!
How many bosoms there with love must burn,
Who start with rapture and with hope return,
Contracting bonds with virtuous resolve,
Which nothing later ever will dissolve.
May angels follow that gay passing throng,
And guard and guide them with that mystic song
Which, heard above, in silence of the heart,
Can goodness, bliss, and each true joy impart!
Thus, while a summer's morn doth cheer the eye,
Its moral will with outward beauties vie.
Not only sunshine and the tuneful groves
Should charm the mind of him who early roves;

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His thoughts should wander to the happy groups
Of those who flock to fields and woods in troops,
Each with a heart enliven'd by the sun,
By influence of beauty fairly won
To correspond in tone with what is seen,
With nothing darksome then to intervene.
So that the flow'ry summer reigns as well
In minds as in the scenes of which you tell.
Around, above you, all in beauty share,
Look then within, true loveliness is there.
The words, "a Summer's Morning," seen in print,
This whole wide world of loveliness can hint.
Thought flies from landscape under dulcet air,
To dwell with rapture on the good and fair,
As if one feeling in a youthful breast
Surpass'd spring, summer, sunshine, all the rest.

But Grief will now await us with its shade,
And show how beauteous mankind then is made.
See then the mourning house all left alone,
With nothing to disturb its quiet tone.
Without, all smile beneath the cheerful sky,
But there's a room in which the sick must lie.
O mother! sister! short is now my span,
Oh, soon return, I'd see thee while I can!
The maiden thinks perhaps she'll pass away
Before she views a coming summer's day.
Tender and human, clinging yet to life,
She thinks perhaps she might have been a wife;

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Enjoining all who love her not to sigh,
Willing to live, yet quite resign'd to die,
Hoping to live, if God should will it so,
So anxious not to cause another's woe;
Thanking her God she now is better much
Than when of death she thought she felt the touch,
For each thing caring that was once her pet,
While gently wishing others should not fret,
And not until the last perceiving clear
That her flight hence was even now so near.
(Pencillings these of angels on pure white,
And like their beauty in her Maker's sight.)
What tender love, what patience, and what rest,
Hereafter, doubtless, but already blest!
Divinest harmonies, unheard till then,
Attesting beauties still reserved for men
Beyond this life, where now through all around
We see the features which in grief are found;
And then the woe of sisters and of brothers
(I pass in silence all the thoughts of mothers),
What sadden'd hearts yet struggling to feel
The hopes that true religion will reveal!
Such grief is beauty,—Beauty be its name,
The fruit of sorrow truly to proclaim;
And sorrow has its mansion ever near,
And thus th' extent of beauty will appear.

Let Labour now employ our tuneful thought
With all the graces that it ever brought

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To those whose lives, devoted to it still,
Obey the laws of the Almighty will.
O Heaven! who can stand and idle be,
When the brave sons of labour he can see?
The ceaseless struggles of an honest breast,
That flies from needed and desired rest—
Acceptance cheerful of a daily pain,
In order others better to maintain—
The care to do what duty may command,
However low the station where they stand—
Contentment, gaiety, and ready will
To use best strength with best acquired skill,
With no dull envy for another's lot,
Though all their own poor merits are forgot—
These are true beauties spread the country o'er;
And men who think can hardly seek for more.

Yet other forms and countless fill our life,
For think of children, mothers, and the wife!
Descant, anatomize each smile, each sigh;
'Tis beauty to enchant th' interior eye
Of him who knows, in bosoms such as these,
Let who will doubt, no selfishness he sees.
Oh, with what purblind sight some men will creep,
Pretending to be wise, and counted deep!
As if one glance within a woman's heart
Would not transfix these follies like a dart,
Piercing the shallow texture of their will,
That seeks in goodness to find evil still.

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Domestic love, in all relations dear,
Has from the sophist's doubt no wound to fear;
And where on earth, however far you roam,
Cannot be found the sweet and peaceful home?
Where beauty inward forms true fragrant bowers,
Surpassing all the sheen of fairest flowers;
The roses, pinks, forget-me-nots are piled,
For you see youth and age, the brave and mild.
What tender tints of soft cerulean blue
In those whose loves are ever constant, true;
What blending of the white and crimson pale
In the soft maiden, if you knew her tale;
What true and loyal flowers of the sun,
Who love at last as when they first begun,
Though age has dimm'd the lustre of the light
Which, like its emblem, has to set in night!
Oh, houses of the million! there I see
What Heaven still calls her own blest charity.

But leave each home and pass along the street,
The same interior beauty you will meet.
For social ties, by toil, by trade created,
Show beauty, and by the form unabated.
'Tis common, and exposed to each mind's eye;
Is that a reason you must it deny?
The docile 'prentice rising with the lark,
At work while all around him still is dark,
Who, cheerful, whistles on his lonely way,
And finds in toil itself amusing play—

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The rough-clad men on whom our lives depend,
In whose routine of service nought's to mend,
Have these no beauty for the piercing ken
Of those, by Heaven well taught, who feel as men?
I only glance at these sights as I sing,
And bid you through them urge a constant wing;
For stop and listen, mark, and onwards fly,
To you in every haunt of men they're nigh.
The youth who hides his good deed as a fault,
Who kindness and not self-praise ever thought;
The poor old mother spreading out her wares,
And while she spreads them muttering her prayers,
Arranging with such care her stock of fruit,
So knowing how each lad and lass to suit,
A basket and a nook her narrow tether,
Still blessing God amidst the foulest weather;
The will of each to risk a life or limb,
If any other can be saved by him,—
What beauty can with acts like these compete,
Though all beneath a rugged form you meet?
Then love itself—I sing it without fear,
In beauty new will primitive appear
At times in spots, a desert all around,
Oasis true itself unalter'd found.
The East despotic, and the West corrupt,
Poetic manners yet exist unhurt.
Unnumber'd instances might here be seen,
If walls or ranks did never intervene.
Society with scorn may pass all by,
But there they are to an impartial eye,

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The great injustice of the world so cold
Will not endure to hear these beauties told;
Refined depravity will e'er believe
That all such pictures serve but to deceive.
Grave men, recoiling from its moral blight,
Have neither hearts nor ears, and still less sight;
But still Love's primitive and sweetest flower
Is found untainted in the lowly bower.
You fly to regions oriental, wild,
As if there only could be found the child;
And all the while he rests his spangled wings
Beneath some roof of which no poet sings.
You court some hideous phantom of your mind,
To what is true and beauteous proving blind,
While there, some paces only from your door,
The matchless artist shows his richest store.
For there is beauty mental, though with sense,
And not to own it is but fond pretence.

But now still higher Fancy bids me soar,
To witness beauty that should move us more.
For mankind still must be survey'd again,
As subject ever to religion's reign;
And here, as eyes interior on them turn,
With love for them must nature even burn.
For, creature soft, so often wanton, wild,
To latest breath in many things a child—
Deceived, enticed, and wanting steady will,
To find its good unmix'd with any ill—

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Careless of self when heeding some false star,
To follow brightness shining from afar—
Yet wishing always what is right and fair,
Unheeding mischief that still lurketh there—
Has still the deep-fix'd wish within its soul,
To love and worship Him who rules the whole.
The fault committed by the girl or youth,
Will never steel their heart against the truth;
They own their failings, think all others good,
Their own hearts by themselves misunderstood.
But one short word unlocks the fount of tears,
And, mercy heard, the sinner disappears;
Pity they ask from others and from God,
And bow in silent love before His nod—
Their love intenser, knowing that they err'd
Through weakness, hopes and hearts so soon deterr'd
From virtue's hard and upward rugged steep,
And, pouring out their souls in tears, they weep.
Oh! if their penitence such beauty be,
What meets our view when holiness we see?
We often think that God is little served,
But such a censure has not been deserved;
For, after all, a woman says, we own
That man's most constant love to God is shown.
And woman says it, whose quick piercing eyes
No subtle secret of the heart defies.
And she at least may say it fearless so,
In whom true sanctity will chiefly grow.
In fact, the world external this proclaims,
By institutions, customs, works, and names.

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For Him in every town the palace stands,
Which that whole complex boast of man commands;
For Him high art creates those wondrous things
Which it refuses to the pride of kings;
The painter and musician ever show
They work for Him more than for aught below;
For Him the rarest jewels from the mine,
For Him the marble and the purple shine.
Man knows He needs not rich symbolic store,
But how could he show deep intention more?
A cloak of wool—Saint Martin's, nothing grand,—
Become a symbol of our Lord's command
Obey'd, was soon transfigured by those alms,
Never to yield to any victor's palms.
In marble, granite, jasper, porphyry,
In cloth of gold wrought full of mystery;
While diamonds, pearls, purple, satin, all,
Are deem'd but poor to decorate that pall.
By nameless genius made a cherish'd theme,
On countless piles you see its radiance gleam.
Great Raphael, Goujon, and Cellini bold,
By noblest works have all its story told;
By Benvenuto carved—on banners hung,
By Goujon sculptured, and by Raphael sung;
While Hugo's pen, exhausting all the store
Of its past glories, can astonish more.
Then mark the worship which with nature vies,
Each dawn and evening rising to the skies!
Sweet thrush and lark, O heart, how they do sing!
As if to God their praises they would bring.

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You are a poet? yes; so none deny,
To laud the worship in the grove and sky;
But if you speak of churches and their choirs,
That instant poetry or wisdom tires;
And yet 'tis there I'd send you to survey
How beauteous mankind is on festal day.
In France, what hours are spent in fervent prayer,
What love, what homage, and what songs are there!
Let others speak of nations to them known—
I sing as last impressions give me tone.
True, some will only see the marble's glow,
But the chief beauty—'tis each breast can show.
What concentration inwardly is found!
Unearthly air seems wafted all around.
The family of God, so call'd in prayer [1],
The spell, the union, the enchantment's there.
Familiam tuam! Jesus, Mary, John,
Disciples countless, doubts are fled and gone!
You see the faithful round you as you kneel,
And down the thoughtful face a tear will steal.
True beauty! elsewhere love it when it's near,
But own, adoring, it surpasses here!
Now still a wider theme we should unroll,
And glance at what is witness'd in each soul
Far off, left lonely—all in homes unknown,
Where bloom the flowers but in the churches sown,
Whence I must turn, for stay I may not dare,
Though I confess my heart from youth was there.

[1] 21st Sund. after P.

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Withdrawn then thus amidst the world's dull strife,
Behold religion's beauty in each life.
What portraits! by Angelico just made?
Nay, nor by Raphael—they are left in shade;
Oh, 'tis the Master Artist paints it all!
Admiring, down and in deep silence fall!
Heaven! what love to mankind then is due,
When faith and holiness in them you view!
What love? I ask; 'tis not the love of man,
O God! 'tis more, though utter it who can?
Oh, where can light and colours now be found,
To paint what's seen each day on such a ground?
Wife, mother, daughter of her tender heart,
Oh yes, the thought of thee can all impart.
Lætitia beauteous, and thou peerless Jane!
Oh, each must aid me in this highest strain.
In thee each loved one I perceive and feel,
What here no poet's music can reveal—
The beauty of our race transformèd so,
By matchless graces which in these will grow—
That soft and tender love for all our race,
In which a seraph's ardour you can trace—
That sweet and purifying noble ire,
When ill would mar the good to which aspire
Such hearts and minds with all their truth and might,
To reach the source of Beauty beyond sight—
That docile yielding to the gracious plan,
To form and perfect every breathing man—
That faith courageous in what's yet unseen,
That scorn of what would basely intervene,

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That honest owning of soft nature still,
Combined with such a great heroic will,
That mild accordance with great duty's call,
That wish to seek in God their utmost all,
That view of each thing by the light of skies,
Which open wider as the spirit flies—
He who can think of these, nor beauty see,
Remains indeed a mystery for me.
And then that parting of the spirit there!
What sight of beauty can with this compare?
"Jesus and Mary, but can this be death?"
Such the last words of the poor struggling breath!
Another peaceful love for loved ones calls,
The soul flies upward, and the body falls.
Oh, wondrous food to human bosoms given,
The room she dies in but the hall of heaven!
Go, search through all the things most beauteous, fair,
To which the artist will with joy repair,
And say what loveliness surpasses this,
When the last act of life is but a kiss—
A kiss for Christ, presented on the tree,
A kiss for brothers, sisters, you and me!
Great God! such beauty fills up all the store
Of what is given here; there's left no more
For Fancy's self to dream or to portray,
When God who gives her guides her on her way.

And now let Science hold her wondrous scroll
And show the laws by which the planets roll,

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Yourself imagine floating through the sky
'Midst suns all fix'd and stars revolving by—
'Midst cycles, orbs whose still unchanging way
Can the Almighty power best display.
Descending from these heights to earthly ground,
Let artists sing the beauties therein found,
Let the whole complex variegated scene
Of beauty exquisite in all that's seen,
In forms and colours, changes, be survey'd,
As if the whole to charm were only made,
And still above, beyond them all will shine
These inward beauties from the Hand Divine,
Imparted to its creatures from the first,
Combining Godlike grace with human dust,
And still to man vouchsafed, though in his fall,
By Him who sees and can restore it all.
But beauty such as this should kindle love,
Then why to blame so constant and reprove?
God saw man sunk in worse condition low,
We need not add what He would then bestow.
Will you who see him with your vision dim,
Think to show goodness when condemning him?
Let charges such as these be left to one
Who knows and wills when treason he has done.
True brothers all below of softest mould,
By him, and not by us, let sums be told;
For no man can, however he may try,
Make up those books for other scrutiny.
Enough, we see with inward eyes of soul
How beauty liveth ever in the whole.

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Let love and tenderness for human kind
Be the result of a deep thoughtful mind.
Yes, faults and crimes exist as hideous spots,
But even fair leaves and flowers have their blots.
And often when to wrath you feel impell'd,
The fancied blemish would be soon dispell'd,
If piercing deeper in the hidden field
You found the beauty in its veins conceal'd.
When God indulges, how can vain man boast
Of what should crush and terrify him most,
The thought that he saw ugliness to scare
When angels smiled on beauty even there?

But cease, my simple unregarded lyre,
And end invoking some bright seraph's fire,
To kindle for each one we see true love,
And then our wings are free to mount above
Where beauty in its essence pure is found,
While songs of Heaven only cause the sound,
Inviting all its glorious grace to see
Through blissful ages of eternity.

CONVALESCENCE,

IN THE GARDEN OF POULIGUEN.

HEALTH wings the feet o'er hill and vale;
No bounds it stoops to know;
But list a short and simple tale,
What sickness can bestow.

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When parting, it will leave a friend
As Convalescence known—
A pale one, constant to attend,
For past grief to atone.

Of Theages the bridle rough
Wise Plato praised of old,
Deeming sickness then enough
To check from evil bold.

But here we have a softer rein
Of silk, though quite as strong,
Uncertain movements to restrain,
And all that sounds like wrong.

This pale friend opes a garden fair,
A small space wall'd around;
You breathe the sweet reviving air,
You feebly touch the ground.

Once more the sky! the sun! the breeze!
No tongue can ever tell
Your joy when weakness feels and sees
What none adore when well.

And here it is a tender sky
That Italy might own,
An azure vault to charm the eye,
O'er all a magic tone.

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From plant to plant you make your way;
A station is each flower
Where you feel delight to stay,
Though changing still your bower.

At one time roses close your side,
Then grape pavilions light,
And then with laurel you abide,
Or with geraniums bright.

Queen Marguerites are ready there,
Like troops of damsels gay,
To welcome you with faces fair
That smile the live-long day.

Then would your eyes on green repose?
You have the dew-fed grass,
With shades the Arbutus bestows,
Inviting those who pass

On paths exposed to breeze and sun
Or sinuous 'midst "groves"
Still fragrant when the day is done,
And each one silent roves.

For 'tis not only flowers bright
That smile upon you here;
Sweet ruling Graces are in sight,
And often they draw near.

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Companions of the human kind
With airy footsteps greet
Each blooming flower, which, like their mind,
Unveil'd is glowing sweet.

Then water from a fountain small
Presents a blue recess,
Where fairest faces of them all
Might gaze in loveliness.

Ginerium's knightly plumes there wave,
How tall and white they grow!
Which now our climates well can brave,
And wand-like beauties show.

What need have you o'er oceans wide
To pass from this small pale,
When strangers such are at your side
With each his native tale?

Queen Marguerite in China grows,
And sunflower in Peru,
Tulips, azalias, laurel-rose
From Asia, India flew.

The last from Greece has wander'd here,
It knows Eurotas well;
Of Portugal you needs must hear
If Belle-du-jour will tell.

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Let ten feet now here count a league,
As you will shift your seat,
Sit down and travel—no fatigue,
No spot that is not sweet.

If you remark and study near
Whatever meets your eye,
Dimensions all will disappear,
The small with great will vie.

The grass is forest for the ant;
The moss its vast wild moor,
With roads on which it has to pant,
Intent on daily tour.

Clad is each spot with beauty new,
To charm your watchful eyes,
At noon, at eve, 'tis not the view
You saw when day did rise.

With sixty tints in blue alone,
Revolving earth casts shade,
That changes with each colour's tone;
To vary all is made.

The nameless tints you hoped to find
Each time you feebly stray
Back to the spots that charm'd your mind,
Are gone and pass'd away;

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Succeeded by another tone,
Still beauteous, yielding joy,
An emblem that we nothing own
Which time will not destroy.

Your journeys too 'midst flow'rets' smiles
Revive that alter'd tone
With which you once rode weary miles,
Each hour with its own.

For here the moments all are mark'd
By some new change assign'd
To plants and insects round you park'd,
And influencing mind.

And then, from levee of the flowers,
By rule they open, close,
Leontidon keeps early hours [1],
But Vesper each one knows.

Yea, every insect, every colour,
And every tint around,
Enjoys its own especial hour
When it is always found.

Besides, though lining walks along,
No asphodels are here,
Each stalk will be a theme for song,
With sprouting marvels near.

[1] Shuts at three.

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Showing how buds, unfolding, change,
In Nature's wondrous way,
As by exotics rare you range,
Surprised from day to day.

I knew not then Alphonso Karr,
When thus my fancy flew,
Like his, my voyage was not far[2],
My own results I drew.

Here are precious stones that fly,
And gems that fragrance pour—
Your emeralds but please the eye,
No jewels offer more.

I cried, what startling things to see,
In acts of insects strange;
Each fly a theme of mystery,
Your thoughts to disarrange.

In tiny quaint forms what a will!
Pursuing still their prey,
A lion's heart, an eagle's bill,
When driven oft away.

Then, animals each other kill,
While man alone can show
How strange it is to have the will
To be one's own great foe!

[2] "Voyage autour de mon Jardin."

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From dreams disquieting, so near,
You turn, and half with dread ;
But Love in birds will reappear,
To soothe a wand'ring head.

Enough, 'tis goodness shows the most,
Let that suffice for end ;
Of witnesses there's here a host,
To prove that God's a friend.

But what a liberty you steal,
Though here obliged to stay ;
To all thus fetter'd I appeal,
How could they farther stray ?

No honey-bee, devoid of care,
Can lead a life more free
Than yours, although a captive there,
And circumscribed you be.

For books with sunshine wing your mind
To soar beyond all space ;
The freest of the human kind,
Who can with you keep pace ?

'Tis good to be shut in with walls,—
Like Karr, I think them fair,—
Alone with flowers, safe from calls,
With shrubs, and sun, and air.

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De Sales would have the garden small,
To savour of restraint;
A corner, little book—that's all,
Where joy's without a taint.

When bodies move more restlessly,
Without restraint or bar,
Our souls seem curb'd mysteriously,
And cannot fly so far.

The one or other must have here
Confinement now and then—
The mind, to be erratic mere—
The body, to be men.

Oh, what is it to traverse earth,
Or sail from pole to pole,
If of wing'd mind there be a dearth,
While limbs know no control?

So here this law of art is taught,
Regarding great and small,
From little much can still be sought,
But simply nought from all.

And he who wishes all to see,
Defeated of his aim,
Sees nothing, thinking he can be
Unlimited in fame.

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Mysterious Nature here shows more
Its marvels to your eyes,
Than if you roved the wide world o'er,
To seek some fresh surprise.

Nay, what are walks, knees supple, bold,
With change of scene so dear,
But labour that seems stale and old,
Compared with what is here?

Oh, here we'd stroll for ever by,
And could a whole world find;
The thought that, strong again, we fly,
Makes health seem quite unkind.

What! launch'd upon man's ocean wide,
Once more so restless grown,
The old wild course o'er life's full tide,
With wrecks and dangers strewn!

Yes, even so; recover'd health
Will all again require;
We rest in ports like this by stealth,
And life is meant to tire.

O Pouliguen, D'Esgrigny's home,
What health thou dost impart!
I'll praise thee wheresoe'er I roam;
Thou winnest each one's heart.

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I pass in silence all the rest,
I only speak of mine,
Reviving with thy peace so blest,
And henceforth ever thine.

WIND

ON A GREY SUMMER'S MORNING, AFTER A LONG CONTINUANCE OF BRIGHT CALM WEATHER.

Oh, sweet is the song of the maiden shy,
And the chorus of voices fine,
But the sound of wind, as it passes by,
Somehow startles and seems divine,
As it shakes the flower and bends the tree,
Wild, sweeping on fretful, mysteriously.

See how the shrub will now stoop at the sigh,
And the flower bow down its head.
And what if we heard it the grave-yard nigh,
As if mourning over the dead,
While it passes, casting its solemn spell,
And whither or whence no mortal can tell?

Or what if we heard it some ruins near,
Of tall palace or abbey grey,
Neglected, so silent as to cause fear?
Oh, how much has it then to say,

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As it bends the weed on the high rough wall,
And you dread to traverse that roofless hall,

Where the last trace of man attracts your eyes
In a knocker, a hinge, a door,
But in that form exciting surprise,
Where life is seen no more.
Hark! through the split crannies of paintless oak,
What a deep hollow voice has sigh'd and spoke!

Oh yes! there are sounds that speak to the soul,
That can bring back the past and gone,
And over which science has no control
When its best has been said and done,
Determining with precision its own,
What can be effected by each new tone.

And such is the sigh of the wind that plays
Through the plants of a garden fair,
With such wild, and fitful, and startling ways,
That you feel something strange is there,
Which speaks of the future, speaks of the past,
And tells you how all things are speeding fast.

Yet this stranger now in the air erst bright,
Thus murmuring words of his own,
No sorrow unblended will bring to light,
Though hollow and grave be his tone,
A shout, a long sigh, or a burst that dies,
Which ever mere musical art defies.

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'Tis a ditty, a soft, wild, ancient song,
Full of hope, yet with sadness mix'd;
And such as to nature will still belong,
When to nothing constant and fix'd,
Though reaching still down to the depths of your soul,
Summon'd to thought by its tragical toll.

The garden itself, on this morning grey,
Has now too its own voice to utter;
A tribute of some kind it needs must pay,
So all is disorder and flutter,
The marguerites, roses, gineriums, all,
Low bending as if they would prostrate fall.

Beds of convolvulus, tender and white,
Are shuddering all in a crowd;
Lone, slender, fair things that stood such a height,
Are no longer motionless, proud,—
A beauteous bevy that runs here and there,
Scatter'd their feathers, dishevell'd their hair.

But though flowers fly and shrubs will bend
At the voice of the fitful guest,
They seem to cry out, "Who an ear will lend
Now to him who denies us rest?
It is not for us, mere poor frighten'd flowers,
To profit by what he would say in bowers.

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Let man then attend to the mystic sound,
For to him it can speak most clear,
When bidding him look still ever around,
And to mark what advances near,
With steps all unheard, till flowers quiver;
And ends are obtain'd the same as ever."

LA BRETESCHE.

WRITTEN AFTER A VISIT TO THE MARQUIS OF MONTAIGU.

MONTAIGU, noble, thou type of the great,
In courage of soul hold thee on through time;
And to those who once witness thy antique state
The past will return with glorious chime,
When all that we love in ages of old
Is seen here in life as in story told.

It is not thy woods, as dark as the night,
It is not thy castle, so vast and fair,
As it suddenly bursts on the startled sight,
Showing drawbridge and water round it there,
With towers and bastions so grim and stern,
True knightly old pile as you then discern.

It is not the splendour of board and hall,
That fires the fancy and yields it food,
When a glance of the mind discloses it all,
With a rapid thrill that is understood;

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No, sooth, for all this may be seen elsewhere,
And no poet to sing it found to dare.

But, 'tis ways of the Christian noble here,
Of Joinville, St. Louis, in ages past,
Oh, 'tis this that astonishes, seen so near,
Conferring a glory ever to last,
When men burn with love for the faith so grand,
And feel their deep minds revive and expand.

Oh, who without joy can see hearts so high,
To nature still true, Homeric and pure,
While yet soaring to dictates of saints so nigh,
With deeds for eternal years to endure,
When sung will be alms to the poor man's cot,
And triumphs of conquerors be forgot?

Religion! thou mystic balm for the breast,
How sweet here and vast is thy secret power!
When conferring on greatness on earth such rest
As now reigns in this antique feudal tower,
Where men wonder more at joy of a soul,
Than at the high grandeur which stamps the whole!

For sweet is the piety old and true,
Playful, that laughs with the gay and the young,
Where nothing extreme or "put on" meets the view,
What by no minstrels could ever be sung,
Who abhor and revolt from all pretence,
With keenness of soul and instinct of sense.

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Chivalry! Honour! now hail to thy seat,
La Bretesche will point to thy constant pole,
Like a star in the darkness, where nought we meet
But what can mislead a benighted soul,
Following meteors fitful to gleam,
Delusive, fantastic, not what they seem.

Remember, remember the banner high,
Young guest, which still floats on those walls so grey,
Emblazon'd with symbols that point to the sky,
'Midst the dark cold shades of thy worldly way.
Remember, and let that flag be thy sun,
But follow it constant, thy race is won.

AFTER HEARING A STRANGER'S IMPRESSIONS

IN THE CHURCH OF POULIGUEN, WHEN VISITED FOR THE FIRST TIME ON RECOVERING FROM A LONG ILLNESS.

Bright Angels! say, are we deceived,
When conscience feels itself relieved
By list'ning to the heart?
Still, is it but another wile,
The soul's faint struggle to beguile,
And rivets to impart?

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Say, is it all delusion vain,
Our fancy only to sustain,
When prayer is silence still,
Like his who thinks he nothing sought,
But once, when anguish accents brought,
To bend his Maker's will?

Though then his vocal prayer was heard,
And a young child most dear preserved
In answer to that prayer,
Does this imply ungrateful wrong,
And ways that to the lost belong?
Must all be tainted there?

Invited by the vesper bell,
A stranger enter'd—shall he tell?
And heard the holy song;
The church was full, the strain was high,
A tear then started to his eye;
He thought of former wrong.

He thought how God is kind and good;
A thrill came o'er him as he stood,
He sank upon the ground;
He thought how he had often fail'd,
And yet A Will had still prevail'd,
That there he should be found,

Where looks conviction could create
That none seen there were reprobate,

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Where all was fair and well—
His heart then glow'd with mystery,
"My God," it cried, "I say to Thee,
I'd love Thee, though in hell!"

'Twas not a thought from Fancy first,
It flash'd a strange spontaneous burst;
He felt before he thought.
Let others only hear their own,
Who feel all this with safer tone,
And you will say they ought.

Thus ever freely sing or say
The fleeting musings of each day,
Without disguise or shame.
The hypocrite is stupid, vile,
But if they're simple, without guile,
Oh, what is there to blame?

THE CURÉ DE ST. MOLPH.

I'LL sing of the holy, and joyous, and free;
Then why should my strain be slow?
A merrier, happier man I can't see,
A holier you can't know.

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All the fields, they are wild with rocks brown and
stern,
The pine-woods are straggling there,
The granite protruding is lined with tall fern;
Lonely crosses ask a prayer.

Celtic in figure, though still far from his home,
These crosses by him restored
Show the pastoral care which makes him to roam,
That God may be well adored.

We come to a hollow with woods all around,
A pond and a garden lawn,
The house stands open, but its owner, not found,
Has gone out since early dawn,

To visit the poor in some cottage far off,
Says a smiling aged crone,
Who tells all our girls their bonnets to doff;
She echoes her master's tone.

The shutters thrown back, and invited within!
The table shall soon be spread.;
There's nothing she'd spare, though the world to win,
And besides, what would be said

By Monsieur le Curé, come back from his ride,
If ever he should be told
That aught in his house had been rudely denied
To guests however so bold?

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The grey-stain'd old house had seen far other ways,
A hunting-lodge once it stood;
The Dukes of Bretagne, in those past ancient days,
Came here to be near the wood.

Then an old rough round tower for staircase served;
In the rooms are books and toys,
A Shakspeare I see too, with much care preserved,
I guess what innocent joys!

But now all is ready; sit down here and dine;
Her we obey in a trice;
Milk, marmalade, fruits, and the curate's best wine,
Is it not spicy and nice?

But then the liqueur! oh now, where does it stand?
Said the lady who knew well
How all secret wishes he could understand,
Were he only here to tell.

I've found it; I've found it; the whole is now done;
Two bottles produced stand there:
I trust, said our Nestor, that we shall have gone
When the Curé comes from prayer!

The words but half utter'd, when hark! there's a voice
That I had not heard till then;
'Tis the Curé himself! oh, now we rejoice!
But dumbfounded look'd the men,

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For an instant—not more—for running in haste,
The master rush'd in with glee,
" It is not from this cupboard that you should taste;
Wait till what's better you see."

Then he laugh'd and would shake us all by the hand;
The strangers soon felt at home;
No, never such welcome in any dear land
You have wherever you roam.

" *You* are English," he cried, "our saint is your own;
Your own is all that you see;
His name, I confess it, is Frenchified grown,
But he came from Malmsbury."

Then too he would give us his sweet choicest flowers,
His chestnuts so large and brown;
Alas! in his absence we'd cull'd from his bowers,
And shaken his glories down.

" 'Tis so much the better," still laughing he cried,
" Your carriage can hold yet more;"
It skills not refusing; he won't be denied;
He thrusts them in at the door.

And pray all the while mark what manners polite,
What tact, and sense of degree!
The French priest has elbow'd the proudest-bred knight,
His soul is all chivalry!

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And now this is the saint who lives with the poor,
Whose time too is all for others;
Whose frugal plain fare with his life will endure,
The friend of children and mothers;

Whose whole life is a tissue of arts divine,
Of humanity the slave,
Who knows not the use of the phrase "it is mine;"
Whose joy is to cheer and save.

Here is no artful foe to domestic bonds,
While aiming at ends deem'd holy,
To which nothing of high honour corresponds—
Intrigue or folly wholly,

Nor ignorance either; for, never well taught,
There are some who quite ignore
The natural virtues which ought to be brought
To religion's sacred store.

But a priest to whom "great" would ever apply,
In his wise regard for each,
At highest still aiming, while tending what's nigh,
The whole of God's law to teach.

O bright France, "pleasant" land of heart and the sun,
I envy thy loves and skies;
Shall I add what more my affection has won?
It is that which never dies.

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Thy priesthood to which we all ever may fly,
To this type constantly near,
In joy to catch beams from a kind happy eye,
In sorrow to wipe a tear!

Yes, I envy the smiles of thy vineyards bright,
And thy fair Loire's blue waves—
But here is what serves us beyond all that light,
For it strengthens, guides, and saves.

APOLOGY FOR THE HEART.

Oh the voice to our childhood once so dear!
Oh the face that charm'd its eyes!
Alas! now for neither we shed a tear,
And the heart feels no surprise,
As still we adhere like leaves to the tree,
While so many branches left stripp'd we see.

Those fallen but lately, we count them all,
Our bloom fades to see them part;
The half of ourselves will drop as they fall,
And sapless we seem at heart,
Beholding them scatter'd, torn, so fair,
Borne wildly by winds through the upper air.

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But those who, in life's delicious sweet morn,
  Were snapp'd off close by our side,
Those who first smiled on us as we were born,
  In our thoughts no more abide;
Reserving tenderness all for the last,
As if with no love for the former past.

The brother, the parents are flown away,
  Scarce remember'd sisters—so,
And have we no tributes of love to pay,
  That long absence should make grow?
While time has swept on with its winds that kill
E'en those that are left entwined with us still?

Yes, and to yield them our hearts' depths are made,
  Though here they contract their folds,
Time their impressions will seem to invade,
  Whatever may be their moulds.
Grief, unlike transports, should yield unto age,
Engraved, as was meant, on a fading page.

But believe not that memory, though it fail,
  Has died with the leaves that close;
There is a bright core that yet will prevail,
  And flower with stamps of those;
When hearts will expand for ever above,
And bring back each blossom of former love.

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Accuse not the heart then with sad surprise,
Though its radiance seems to fade,
It only reserves for your future eyes
Of the past each fondest shade.
For freed from the cold of the mortal air,
Unfolded, each trace from the first is there.

THE END.

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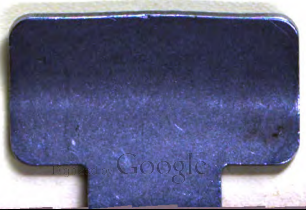
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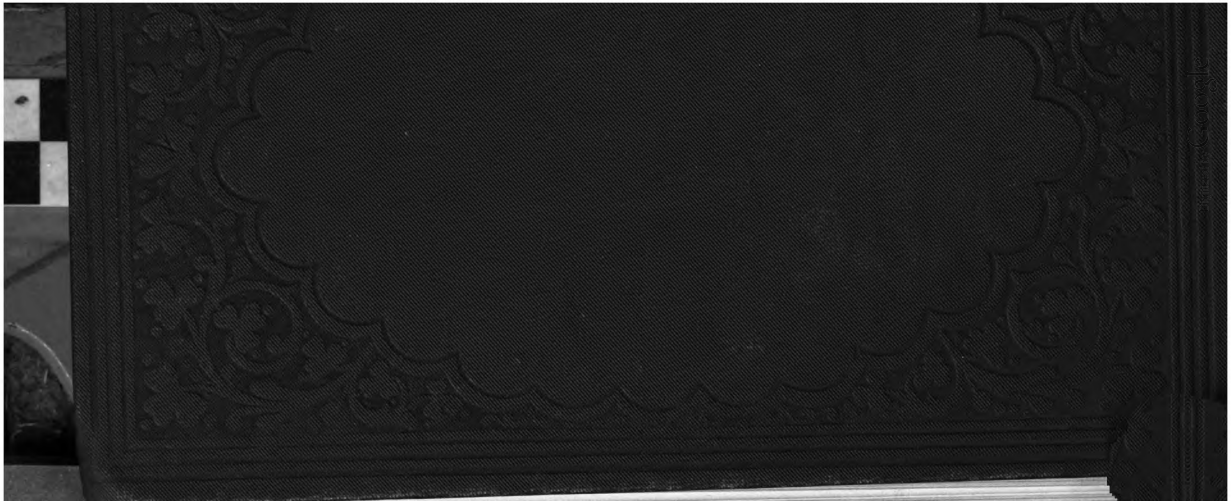

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